

THE
GROUNDS
OF A
HOLY LIFE:

OR

The WAY by which many who
were *Heathens*, came to be Renowned
CHRISTIANS; and such as
are now Sinners, may come to be
numbered with *SAINTS*; by
little *PREACHING*.

To which is added,

PAUL's SPEECH
TO THE
BISHOP of *CRETIA*.

As also,

A TRUE TOUCH-STONE OF TRIAL
of *CHRISTIANITY*.

By *HUGH TURFORD*.

THE TENTH EDITION.

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GROUNDS

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R E A D E R.

MOST Men will acknowledge, That the primitive Churches, to whom Paul wrote his Epistles, exceeded in many Respects, the Professors of Christianity in our present Age ; and good Grounds they have so to believe : For that the said Apostle, in his Epistles, told the Corinthians, That their Bodies were the Temples of the Holy Ghost : He told the Ephesians, That they were Fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God : He told the Philippians, That their Conversation was in Heaven : He told the Colossians, That they were delivered from the Power of Darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of the dear Son of God : He told the Hebrews, That they were come to the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. And

Peter, in his general Epistle to the Churches, told them, That they were a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, a holy Nation, a peculiar People.

But is this our State? Can we say, from a sensible Feeling, that the holy Spirit of God dwells in us? That our Bodies are the Temples, in which we may behold his Presence, feel his Power, fear, worship and serve him? Can we say, that our Conversations are in Heaven? That we are translated into the Kingdom of the dear Son of God, and live under the Scepter of his Government? That we are come to the heavenly Jerusalem, where the great God is worshipped in Spirit and in Truth? Or are we not Strangers to all these Things, and yet perswade ourselves that we are the People of God, and good Christians?

The primitive Churches had the honourable Name of Saints; we can give ourselves no better Name than miserable Sinners: And what is the Reason? Most of the forementioned Churches, before their Conversion, were but Heathens; they were not born of Christian Parents, nor train'd up in the Christian Faith, as we think

think we are : And after Conversion they had but little Preaching, in comparison to what we have ; neither were they furnished with Books so plentifully as we are.

We cannot conclude, that the Kingdom of Christ, that then appeared in Power, did (as the Sun in the Firmament sometimes doth) shew itself in a Morning, and be no more seen all Day : For the Kingdom of Christ is an everlasting Kingdom, and the new Covenant that was made with the House of Jacob, an everlasting Covenant. Neither may we conclude, that God hath withdrawn himself from the Children of Men ; for he never forsakes us, unless we first forsake him.

The Apostle foresaw, that there would be a falling away from the Grace in which many primitive Christians were establish'd ; which soon after his Decease came to pass. But our Preachers say, That the dark Night of Apostacy is over, and that we live in Gospel Days again ; but if so, where are the Fruits ? We may (I confess) hear Gospel Words ; but where is the Gospel Power, by which Believers come to be the Sons of God, and to bear his Image in Righteousness ?

Why are not we, who are called Christians, grown to the Stature of them that were born Heathens, and brought up in Blindness and Ignorance? Why are not we sanctified, and made a holy People, as well as they? Why are not our Bodies cleansed, and made an Habitation for the eternal Spirit, as theirs were? Why are not our Conversations in Heaven, or at least more heavenly than they be? The Reason to me is this: We have not built upon the same Foundation that they built upon; for this we are to understand, that the Heathens had not the Scriptures as we have, and so could not frame a Form of Godliness therefrom, as many since have done, made up with good Words, calling that Godliness, and resting in an outward Performance thereof, without any true Conversion, or Sense of that inward Life and Power, that the primitive Christians came to feel, and found in themselves through Faith, and the Operation of the eternal quickning Spirit of Jesus.

The Heathens, as well as others, were of God's Creation, (all Nations being made of one Blood) and so had in themselves,

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selves, as every Man hath, a good Spirit, as well as a bad ; Light, as well as Darknes ; something that reproved them for Sin, as well as something that tempted them to Sin. And being, by the Apostle, turned from the Darknes that was in them, to the Light ; from that which tempted them to Sin, to that which convicted and reproved them for Sin ; cleaved thereunto, confided therein, and became Followers thereof : And by cleaving to the Good, they were delivered from Evil ; by following the Light, they came to be translated out of the Kingdom of Darknes, and to have their Conversations in Heaven, whilst they were upon Earth.

These built on a sure Rock, a living Foundation, on CHRIST, as he in all Ages was, and still is, in his spiritual Appearance, the Light of the World, and the Life of Righteousness ; and taking his eternal Spirit in themselves, for their Guide, turned from whatsoever they were thereby convicted of, and reproved for ; by which Esau, or the first Nature, came to be supplanted, and he, whose Right it is to reign, came to have the Rule in them, and the Government over them.

And as the Darknes that eclipsed the Brightness of the Sun of Righteousness in them, came to be removed, they came to have a clear Discerning what was of God, and what was selfish, and to be denied ; and turning from every Motion that was not of God, the Body of Sin became mortified, their Insides became cleansed, the Lump became leavened ; such as were carnal became spiritual : And this made them a peculiar People.

And did we walk in their Footsteps, we might rise to their Attainment : But if we build on Words, and outward Services, without Spirit and Life, we can never rise ; for, as Paul said, in another Case, If I speak with the Tongue of Men and Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding Brass : So say I in this Case, If we hear Men and Angels, if we could live continually under the Sound of good Words, if we have no Regard to that inward Light which discovers the Rising of evil Motions, and Power from God to turn from them, we can never mortify Sin, cleanse our Souls, and become a holy People. The Work of Sanctification

is inward, and to be effected by inward Means ; nothing but inward Light can expel inward Darkneſs ; nothing leſs than eternal Life, can deliver our Souls from the Power of Death.

Since Men came to be perſwaded, that though they ſow Tares, they ſhall reap Wheat ; though they go down into the Grave Sinners, they ſhall riſe Saints, and attain in another World, what the primitive Chriſtians attained to in this World ; their Converſations have not been in Heaven, but in the Earth ; they have walked in Darkneſs and not in the Light ; the God of this World hath been ſerved, and not the God of Heaven. And what future Happineſs this can produce, let the Wiſe in Heart judge.

THE
 GROUNDS
 OF A
 HOLY LIFE.

PAUL, in his Epistle to the Galatians, Chap. v. 16. had this Saying: *Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh.* And in his Epistle to the Romans, Chap. viii. 13. he had this Saying: *If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live.* If ever Scriptures were written for our Learning, these Scriptures were; for much may be learned therefrom.

The End of Preaching, in our present Age, and many Ages past, hath been, That the Sons and Daughters of Men might learn thereby to deny, turn from, and forsake every evil Deed; and come

to live a sober righteous godly Life, in this present World, that they might have Peace with God in their own Consciences here, and eternal Life hereafter.

Now to effect this great Work, in which Thousands of Labourers have for many Years been employ'd, the Apostle gives this short Exhortation : *Walk in the Spirit.* Affirming unto the *Galatians*, that if they walk'd in the Spirit, they should not fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh ; they should not yield to evil Motions, nor satisfy their carnal Desires ; which is the only Way to mortify the Deeds of the Body, and cure all spiritual Infirmities. But this Way of God's Salvation hath been so long rejected, that few in our present Age know what this Spirit is, where they may have Acquaintance therewith, or how they may walk therein. And that our Understanding may be opened in this weighty Concern, let us consider,

1. What was *Paul*, and how he came to be a Gospel Minister.

2. What

2. What were the People to whom he wrote those Epistles.

3. What the Apostle call'd *Flesh* and *Spirit*, and wherein we walk after them.

4. What we are to understand by his Words, *die* and *live*.

5. How we may, through the *Spirit*, mortify the *Deeds* of the *Body*?

By reading the Scriptures we may find, that *Paul* was an *Israelite*, of the Seed of *Abraham*, and brought up a Scholar, well instructed in the Law; and as to his Religion, he was a *Pharisee*. And what were the *Pharisees*? Not a loose, prophane People; but in outward Appearance, a very religious People, zealous for their Temple and the Service thereof; with all other outward Observations: Insomuch that *Jesus* said of them, *that they made clean the Outside of the Cup and Platter*; which few now do.

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was more active than *Paul*, wasting the
 Churches beyond measure.

But in the Height of his Persecution,
 not Man, but God, put a Stop to his
 Proceedings ; shewing him, that it was
 not Men, but Christ in Men, that he
 persecuted, which was really so ; for
 had not Christ, by his eternal Spirit,
 been in those Men whom *Paul* perse-
 cuted, opening the Eyes of their Un-
 derstandings to see the Emptiness of all
 Shadows, and to turn from them, *Paul*
 would have had nothing to say to
 them ; but they inclining to the Wor-
 ship of God in Spirit, and slighting
 Temple Worship, *Paul* looked upon
 them as a People not worthy to live.

But it pleased God to reveal in *Paul*
 the same Christ that he persecuted in
 others ; and that Revelation, or inward
 Knowledge of Christ, was the Founda-
 tion of all *Paul's* Knowledge in the
 Mystery of Godliness : He had not his
 future Teaching from Men, nor from
 Books, but from the Operation of the
 eternal Spirit of Jesus in himself. For
 keeping to the Leading of that Spirit,
 he grew in Grace ; and as he grew
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in Grace, he grew in the Knowledge of Christ, and so went not up to *Jerusalem*, to them who were Apostles before him, for Instructions or Orders; but in the Strength of the Lord, with a Book of Experiences in his Heart, instead of a Bible in his Hand, he went into *Arabia* to preach the Gospel to the *Heathen*: And what Foundation did he lay? Not *Circumcision*, which was the Foundation of the *Jews* Religion; nor *John's* Baptism, which since became the Foundation of the *Christian* Religion; for he told the *Corinthians*, that *Christ* did' not send him to baptize, but to preach; and thanked God, for that he baptized no more of them than *Crispus* and *Gaius*, and the Household of *Stephanus*.

As *Paul's* Eyes were then open to see the Gift of God in himself; so his Work was to open the Eyes of others, that they might see the Gift of God in themselves also.

Those *Heathens* had, as every Man that cometh into the World hath, an inward Light, that shewed them, as it sheweth us, what is *right*, and what is
wrong;

wrong ; what is *just*, and what is *unjust* : Though in their Ignorance they might have as little Regard thereunto as any of us now have.

As the Kingdom of Heaven consisteth of Righteousness, *Paul's* Work was to reduce those People to a *righteous Life* and *heavenly Conversation* ; and what better Foundation could any Man lay, in order to a righteous Life, than a *Light in ourselves*, that shines continually, manifesting every unrighteous Action ? A *Guide* that truly followed, will lead unto God, from whom, by unrighteous living, all Men depart. This *Paul* experienced, and his Experiences made him an able Minister, capable of preaching without Book or Study, and confidently to affirm unto the *Galatians*, that their Way to a *righteous Life*, was to walk *in the Spirit*, or keep to this *Guide*.

And thus have I shewn, how *Paul* came to be a Gospel Minister : And now I shall shew, what the People were to whom he wrote those Epistles.

The *Romans* and *Galatians*, before their Conversion, were called *Heathens*,
for

for that they knew not the true God, but worshipped dumb Idols. A People that lived, as too many now do, in all manner of Ungodliness, *walking*, as *Paul* told the *Ephesians*, according to the *Prince of the Power of the Air* ; but being turned from their Darkness, became acquainted with this true *Light*, which never consented to any unrighteous Action.

To this *Light* many of those *Heathens* turned, taking it for their *Guide*, and confiding therein as a sure Foundation ; which was true Faith in him who was given for a *Light* to the *Gentiles*, and one in Nature with the Faith of *Abraham*.

This People became convinced, tho' many of us are not, that after they were turned unto the Lord, they had a *Race* to run. As from God and Godliness they had departed, so to God and Godliness they were to return. They did not content themselves as too many of us do, with a *Christian* Name ; but following this *Leader*, they walked in *Newness of Life*, sober, righteous and godly : Which *Paul* commended, telling the *Galatians*, that they *ran well* ;
and

and we should run well also, if we run the like Race; growing, from Day to Day, more *just*, more *upright*, more *honest*, more *faithful*, and more *circumspect*: Which cannot be expected until we take their *Guide* for our *Leader*.

But the Churches of *Galatia* being at that Time (as *Paul* called them) *little Children*, a People of small Growth in the Knowledge of the Mystery of Godliness, were by some (whom *Paul* wish'd cut off) perswaded, as many now are, that an *upright*, *sober*, *godly Life*, and *blameless Conversation*, was not enough; but they must be also in the Exercise of some *outward Worship*: And the *Jews* Religion carrying the greatest Shew of Godliness, they were perswaded to imitate their Customs and Observations.

But *Paul* having experienced the Insufficiency of outward Services, to change Men's Natures, and reduce them to a righteous Life, told the *Galatians*, that if they were *circumcised*, *Christ* should profit them nothing. If they went from an *inward Guide*, to rest, as the zealous *Pharisees* did, on *outward Performances*, he that was given for a *Light* and

and a *Leader*, would not be their Light nor their Leader. And indeed, nothing is more evident ; for if Christ be the *Way*, if walking by the Spirit be the *Means* by which we must mortify Sin, and come to a righteous Life ; whosoever goeth from this *Way*, whosoever flighteth this *Means*, hath no more Benefit by Christ, than a Traveller that forsaketh his Guide hath from his Guide, in order to a righteous godly Life.

As Christ is a *quickning Spirit*, it must be by following him in his spiritual Manifestations, that a righteous Life is recovered ; nothing less can change our Natures, and make us new Creatures ; and until we are new Creatures, our Conversations cannot be in Heaven.

So the Epistles of *Paul* were written to a People who were on their Journey from *Death* to *Life* ; they were come out of *Egypt*, but not come to the *promised Land* ; they were turned from their *Darkness*, and had their Faces *Sion-ward*, but were not come to the *New-Jerusalem*, the City of God ; they had *begun* in the Spirit, but were not *come* to the true Worship in Spirit ;
they

they had *received* Christ, but were not *rooted* and *grounded* in Christ : And to perfect what was begun, the Apostle put them on nothing but this, *Walk in the Spirit*. Keep to your *inward* Guide, the Light of Righteousness, for it is that alone that can raise the Sons and Daughters of Men from their Fall, and bring them to a Life of Righteousness.

The *third Thing* to be considered is, What the Apostle calls *Flesh* and *Spirit*, and wherein we walk after them ?

It is evident, that *Flesh* and *Spirit* are both *Leaders*, otherwise we could not walk after them ; and if *Leaders*, our visible Parts must be *Followers*, bringing forth in our Words and Deeds what is in our Hearts, or conceived in our Minds ; for every Deed hath first a Thought, either good or evil. Evil Thoughts arise from that which *Paul* called *Flesh* : Good Thoughts proceed from that which he called *Spirit*. So then *Flesh* and *Spirit* is a *Root* of *Evil*, and a *Spring* of *Good* in ourselves.

From the *Flesh* proceed all such *Motions* as lead unto *Vice* : From the *Spirit* proceed such *Doubts* as we find in
ourselves

ourselves of yielding thereunto ; and all the *Rebukes* that follow us when we have suffered the Enemy to prevail over us ; and those *Rebukes* are in Love unto us, as our Rebukes are in Love to our Children, that they may stand in Awe, and not offend.

As oft as we yield to *evil* Motions, we give Place to the Devil, and whosoever yields to one evil Motion, shall have another of the same Kind ; and the oftner we yield, the more Ground he hath in us, and the more Power he comes to have over us. And all the Refuge that any Man hath to fly unto, when *evil* Motions arise, is that in his own Heart, that *Paul* calls *Spirit*, for that will not consent to any evil Deed ; and whosoever keeps close to that, keeps close to *God* ; they *abide* with their *Guide*, and *walk* in the *Spirit*.

The converted *Heathens* walk'd by this *Rule* ; they took the eternal Spirit of Christ in themselves for their *Guide* ; they confided therein, and became Followers thereof ; and that brought them to be a holy Nation, and a peculiar People. And we should be the same,
did

did we turn to this eternal Spirit in our own Hearts, and order our Conversations according to the Leadings and Guidings thereof; for keeping to this, we should *not fulfil the Deeds of the Flesh.*

The *fourth* Thing to be considered is, What the Apostle intended by these Words, *Die and Live?*

Certainly he did not, by the Word *Die*, intend a Cessation of their mortal Lives, for such a dying in the Lord's appointed Time is common to all Men; they that live after the Spirit, as well as they who walk after the *Flesh*, must go down into the Grave.

But the *dying* that the Apostle intended, was a *Decay* of our inward Life, a dying unto Righteousness; which few in our present Age take Notice of. Such a dying as the first Man *Adam* died, when he fell from the Government of the eternal Spirit, which was Man's first State: Or such a dying as the House of *Israel* died, when they stuck to *outward* Observations, *flighting Justice, Mercy,* and an *unstable* walking with their God.

Now such as walk after the *Flesh*, living in the Practice of any *known Sin*,
depart

depart farther from God, and come to have less *Life*, less *Light*, less *Grace*, less *Fear* of offending God, and injuring their Neighbours; as we may see by Mens Conversations. And this *Decrease* is a *dying unto Righteousness*.

And as they that live after the *Flesh*, have less *Life*, less *Light*, less *Grace*, less *Fear*; so such as walk after the *Spirit*, doing such Things as are upright, honest, and of good Report, from a Principle in their own Hearts, find an *Increase*; they come to have more *Life*, more *Light*, more *Grace*, more *Fear* of offending God or their Neighbour. And this *Increase* is a *living unto Righteousness*. As the one goes farther from, so the other draws nearer to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Had we not in ourselves *Spirit*, as well as *Flesh*; *Light*, as well as *Darkness*; a *Conductor* in the Way of Life and Salvation, as well as a *Leader* in the Paths of Destruction; we might lay the Loss of Life, and all the Calamities that Sin brings, on *Adam's* Score, or on the Account of the wicked One, from whom all wicked Motions proceed.

Paul

Paul was an expert Doctor in Divinity ; he knew what corrupted the Sons and Daughters of Men, and from whence all the Ungodliness that is in the World doth arise ; and to *cleanse*, to *purge*, to *purify*, to make *Heathens* become *sound Christians*, and *Sinners* become *Saints*, describes no other Means but this, *Walk in the Spirit*. For as we keep to this, we shall learn, as the converted *Heathens* did, not only to *deny* Ungodliness, but also to *live* godly in this present World.

But if we rest, as the zealous *Pharisees* did, in outward Performances, accounting ourselves *righteous* for that we have, as we are persuaded, a right Form of Godliness, and make no Use of the aforesaid Means ; though we have as great a Zeal for our Forms of Godliness, as ever *Paul* had for the *Jews* Religion, it will profit us no more than *Circumcision* would have profited the *Galatians*.

We have had much Preaching and Teaching ; the Joys of Heaven promised to them that *did well* ; the Torments of Hell threatned to them that *did ill* : But have these Promises and

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Threatnings

Threatnings made us a holy Nation, and a peculiar People, exceeding all others for *Justice, Equity, Truth, and Faithfulness*? Have all the Exhortations that we have had, enabled us to *mortify* the Body of Sin, which is the Cause of Ungodliness? Are we thereby *translated*, as the *Heathens* were, out of the Region of Darkness into the Kingdom of the dear Son of God, so as to have our Conversations in Heaven, whilst our Bodies are on Earth? Can we say, *Old Things are done away*, all exalted Thoughts, all covetous Inclinations, all Wrath and Bitterness; and these *New Things* come in their Places, *Humility, Meekness, Temperance, Self-denial*, with *unfeigned Love* to God and our Neighbour? Can we say, there was a Time in which Sin had such Dominion over us, that we could not *refrain* from fulfilling the Lusts of the Flesh, but now we are so *limited* by the eternal Spirit, that we must be temperate, we must be *sober and vigilant*, we must be *just, upright, and faithful* in Word and Deed; If this be our State, we are as the primitive *Christians* were at their full Attainments,

Attainments, *dead unto Sin, and alive unto Righteousness* : Built upon the same Rock as they were. But if we are not come to this, it would be our Wisdom to turn to the Lord, as they did, and build on the same Foundation that they built upon, *The true Light that enlighteneth every Man that cometh into the World* ; that we may come to be acquainted with the eternal Spirit, as they were, and have a Guide and a Leader in Paths of Godliness, as they had ; for it is by and through the Assistance of the eternal Spirit of Jesus in our own Hearts, that our Corruptions must be *purged out*, and our Inside *made clean* : For as our *walking after the Flesh made all Wounds* ; so it must be our *walking after the Spirit that must heal all Wounds*. As our *living after the Flesh was the Growth of our Unrighteousness* ; so by *walking after the Spirit we mortify Sin, and recover a Life of Righteousness*.

Paul spoke from a good Understanding, when he told the Romans, That which may be known of God is manifest within : There he had his Knowledge in

the Mysteries of Godliness ; whatever he *preached*, whatever he *wrote*, the *Spring* was in himself. He knew no more of the Operation of inward and spiritual Grace than one of us, 'till he came to have his Eyes *inward*, and to *walk* in the *Spirit*, and so recommended to the Churches what he had experienced.

Many can talk of *Redemption*, *Justification*, *Sanctification*, and *Salvation* by *Christ* : But he is a *Christian* who is a *Witness* of such Things wrought in himself. Such may properly be called learned Men : They know what it is to *rise*, what it is to *die*, and what it is to *live* ; what they are redeemed and saved from, and by what Means.

The *fifth* Thing to be considered, is, How the Sons and Daughters of Men may, through the *Spirit*, *mortify* the *Deeds* of the *Body*.

But first, we will consider, what *Deeds* of the *Body* are to be *mortified*, which in general are these : As an evil Spirit in Man is the *Root* of all evil *Deeds* ; so every *Deed* that proceeds from that *Root* is to be *mortified* ; and
nothing

nothing can manifest such Deeds, giving us a true Sight thereof, but the *Spirit* of the *Lord*, or *Light* of Righteousness in our own Hearts, as it comes to shine in Brightness.

To know what *Deeds* are to be *mortified* in all our Attempts and Undertakings, let us look to our Ends therein ; if we have nothing in our Eye but *Justice*, *Equity*, *Honesty*, and *plain Dealings*, we may go on with Safety ; but if *Self* be the moving Cause, if we have not an Eye to our Neighbour's *Interest* as well as our *own*, pretend what we will, such *Deeds* proceed from an evil Root, and are to be denied ; and in denying them, they come to be *mortified* : And what can manifest our Ends in every Action ? Not *Books*, nor *Preachers* ; but the *Spirit* of the *Lord*, which is an *inward* Light.

But we do not find that *Paul* directly charged the *Galatians* with any manner of loose Living, but with their *observing Days and Times* : And what Harm could there be in that ?

Though the *Galatians* might see none, *Paul* saw much, otherwise he would not

have asked them, *Who had bewitched them?* They had begun in the *Spirit*, they had walked for a Season after an *inward Guide*, which is the only Leader to such a Life of Righteousness, as the Lord in all Ages required of the Sons and Daughters of Men; which was not a Form of Godliness without *Life*, but Truth in their *inward Parts*: For if we have *Truth* in our *Hearts*, *Equity* will be performed by our *Hands*.

And to this, *Paul* knew they could never come by imitating an outward *Worship*, much less by observing Days and Times, which in our present Age is become the Nursery of Vice, and so counted it Deeds of the *Flesh*; reasoning thus with them, *Are ye so foolish, having begun in the Spirit; are ye made perfect by the Flesh?* Which is all one as to say, *Are ye so void of Understanding, having begun to walk in Newness of Life, do you think to come to such Perfection as to have your Conversation in Heaven whilst living on the Earth, by going back to the Performance of outward Services?* This *Perswasion*, said he, is not of him that called you. And if it
was

was not of God, it must be from the old Deceiver ; and many have been since deceived thereby ; perswading themselves, that Godliness consisteth in that which is called, but is not true *Devotion*, and not in a well-ordered Conversation, and so live in *Pride, Covetousness, Envy*, and many other Things, which are really *Deeds* of the *Flesh* ; and never come so far, as to mind a Translation out of the Kingdom of Darkness, to live under the Government of the eternal Spirit.

Man's *Fall* was not from any outward Religion or Form of Godliness, but from a Life of Righteousness : A State in which Husband, Wife, Parents, Children, Masters, Servants, and all other Relations, would have known their Place and Duty, and been found therein. From a State in which the Creatures, that God hath given for Man's Use, would have been used, and none of them, thro' Excess, wasted or abused. From a State in which Truth would have been found in our *Words*, and Equity in all our *Deeds*. From a State in which the Will of God would have

been *done* on Earth as it is *done* in Heaven, and the great God by us glorified, and not dishonoured.

From this State, through the Entrance and Growth of Sin, the Sons and Daughters of Men are *departed* : To this State primitive *Christians*, through the Mortification of Sin, *returned*.

This was the Life that the first *Adam* *lost* ; this is the Life that the second *Adam* came to *recover*. As many as have the *Spirit* of Christ, and become *Followers* thereof, *rise* from their *Fall*, *return* unto God, *live* under his Government, and become *Witnesses* of this Life *restored*.

When I have looked upon that called the *Book of Divine Service*, I have found as good Words therein as could be collected out of the Scriptures : Not one to be admitted into the Church without *Security*, promising in their Behalf as much as I have mentioned.

The Promises therein contained, were they but truly performed, would make us a holy Nation, no Way behind the chiefest of Saints ; for those that rose highest, rose no higher than to *walk in*
God's

God's Commands all the Days of their Lives.

But it is rare to find one Man that performs *that* Covenant, and the Reason is this, *We say the Scriptures are our Rule, but we keep not thereunto*; Paul's Advice is not followed, we do not *walk in the Spirit*: Which if we did, the Light of Righteousness in our own Hearts, would shew us the Risings of evil Motions, and what they lead to; and that is the Time to *forsake the Devil and all his Works, with all worldly Vanities and sinful Lusts*: For if we deny evil Motions, we shall never be found in evil Actions; and until we depart from Evil, we cannot do the Things that are good. Sin must be mortified, before we can lead a righteous Life. The Works of the Devil must be denied, before the Commands of our God can be walked in one Day, much less all the Days of our Lives.

And this *Paul* experienced, which made him with great Confidence to say, *Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh*: For if we deny and turn from every Motion that the

Light of Righteousness in our own Hearts *shews* us to be *evil*, we shall not fulfil them, but shall mortify the Root from whence they arise ; for that which is not fed, in Time comes to die.

By this the converted *Heathens* came to be a holy Nation : This is the Way to be Citizens of the *New Jerusalem* : By this Means the *Colossians* were, and we may be translated into the Kingdom of the dear Son of God, to live under his Government. That is the Kingdom that *John the Baptist* proclaimed to be then at hand. This is the Kingdom that the Disciples of Christ were to pray for the Coming of. This is the Kingdom that consisteth of Righteousness, and standeth in Power. This is the Kingdom that all Believers are first to seek ; for under the Government of the eternal Spirit of Jesus in our Hearts, the Sons and Daughters of Men are limited from doing any unrighteous Thing.

Many of the present Professors of *Christianity* are perswaded, that though they are unrighteous in their Lives, yet being in the Exercise of something called

called *Religion*, it shall go well with them: But the living Lord doth not take Notice, what *Religion* we are of, but what *Leader* we *follow*; for let our Religion be what it will, if we live after the *Flesh*, we shall *die*. And though little appears that is called Religion, if we walk after the *Spirit*, if our *Conversation* be in *Heaven*, if *Truth* be in our *Mouths*, and *Equity* performed by our *Hands*, we shall *live*. But who are capable of *walking* after the *Spirit*, and through the *Spirit*, of *mortifying* the *Deeds* of the *Body*?

We may find many, even amongst us, who bear the Name of *Christians*, that, through a Perseverance in Ill-doing, are become dead in Sin, having no Sense or Feeling of any Thing in themselves that is of God: And such as have no Acquaintance with the *Spirit*, cannot walk after the *Spirit*.

Others there are who are not dead, but dying, they have both Sense and Feeling: They have that in themselves that would lead them to better Things than they practise, but have little or no Regard thereunto; they take it not for

their *Guide* ; and whilst they *slight* that in themselves which manifests the Deeds of the Body, they can in no wise *mortify* them.

But some may be found who are weary of their Sins, and burthened with their Iniquities, having in themselves a Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness ; and all such are *living People*, and capable, through the *Spirit*, of *mortifying* the Deeds of the Body.

Satisfied I am, that in our present Age, many have been awakened from the Sleep of Sin, and have had in themselves a true Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness ; but being awakened by an *outward* Ministry, from *that* they expected to have their Hunger and Thirst *satisfied*.

Many may be awakened *with*, but they are not quickned *by* an outward Ministry ; *It is* (as Jesus said) *the Spirit that quickneth* ; and what can raise Life, but that which giveth Life ? What can satisfy a Soul that thirsteth after Righteousness, but that which is in very Truth the Spring of Righteousness ? It is in ourselves the Well is to be found,
that

that whosoever drinketh thereof, shall never thirst ; there is the Spring that floweth up unto everlasting Life.

As the Kingdom of Heaven stands not in *Words*, but in *Power* ; so it is not Words, but the Power of God that can mortify the Deeds of the Body, change our Natures, and make us new Creatures.

Would *Words* fill us with Righteousness, Justice, Truth, Equity and Faithfulness, we should have been a holy Nation long since ; for there hath been no Want of Words, but there is still Want of *Equity* and *Faithfulness* in Mens Deeds.

Could good Words reduce Hearers to a righteous Life, instead of saying *Walk in the Spirit*, Paul would have said to the *Galatians*, *Hearken to your Minister* : He would have had no Need to have recommended unto them an *inward Guide*. Paul's Experience evidenced unto him, that it was not by hearing of Words, but through his Obedience to the *Law* of the *Spirit*, that he came to *mortify* the Deeds of the Body, and lead a righteous Life ; and what he found to be effectual in himself,

himself, that he recommended to the Churches.

Words, though never so numerous, may be forgot, they do not abide ; but the *eternal Spirit* abides, that is the *Teacher* that can never be removed into a Corner. The Use of Words in the Work of Salvation, is to awaken such who are asleep in Sin, and to turn them, as *Paul* turned the *Heathens*, to an *inward Guide* ; and for Admonition, whilst they are on their Journey, to *keep* with their *Guide*.

Had such who hunger'd and thirsted after Righteousness, pressed after what they hunger'd for ; had they acquainted themselves with the *eternal Spirit* that begot those Desires, and followed the Leading thereof, it would have *rooted* out Pride and all Selfishness ; it would have reduced them to an humble, lowly, meek, patient, peaceable Frame, to keep their Promises, to be just in all their Dealings, to do the Thing that was right at all Times ; and this would have removed their Burden, and given them Rest and Peace.

If we would be as the primitive *Christians* were, we must begin where they did ; we must *turn* to the Light of Righteousness in our own Hearts, and *walk* in that Light until we become Children of the Light ; we must *walk* in the just Man's Path by the *Guidings* thereof, 'till Righteousness becomes our Center. This made the primitive *Christians* a religious People indeed ; by this they profited ; otherwise the blind, ignorant *Heathens*, could not have come to be Fellow Citizens with Saints, and of the Household of God.

Paul was no settled Minister at any one Place, they heard him but seldom ; but they heard the Voice of the *eternal Spirit*, as oft as they *stray'd* from Justice, Equity and Faithfulness : And to this Voice *Christians* ought to incline their Ear ; for under the new Covenant, God doth speak unto his People by his *Son*, through the eternal Spirit in our Hearts.

The first Step to a Life of Righteousness, is to acquaint ourselves with that in our own Hearts that *reproves* us for Unrighteousness ; for until we come

to

to this, we are Strangers to the Foundation of a right Conversation : For all Building, all Journeying, all Rising, all Approaching near to the Kingdom of God, depends on our denying, turning from, and utterly forsaking what the Light of Righteousness in our own Hearts doth *convict* us of, and *reprove* us for ; for by such Denials the Deeds of the Body come to be mortified. As we make this our Concern, and are faithful therein, our Light shines more and more ; and the more Light we have, the greater Discovery it makes of what is evil, what is to be denied, turned from, and forsaken ; and guiding our Steps by this, we build on the true Foundation, we walk in a living Way, we grow in Grace, and the Knowledge of Christ, and draw nearer and nearer to his Kingdom and righteous Government ; and all Power is felt in a righteous Life.

This was the Advice of Christ, *Strive to enter in at the strait Gate* ; testifying, that the Way to eternal Life was *narrow* : And what is this *strait Gate*, and
narrow

narrow Way? Not Self-Interest, nor yet Self-Righteousness.

Self-Interest is the *Root* of all covetous Practices, fraudulent Dealings, and unjust Actions. Self-Righteousness is the *Root* of all Formality and Contention about Religion, of which there hath been, and still is, too much in the *Christian* World, persecuting one another, as the unconverted *Heathens* did the primitive *Converts*.

Neither of these Paths leads to that Kingdom that consists of *Righteousness* and *Peace*. Had the converted *Heathens* walk'd in these Paths, they would not have been a holy Nation, their Conversations would have been in the *Earth*, and not in Heaven. But the *strait Gate*, and *narrow Way*, that leads to a righteous Life, is *Self-denial*; a denying of every Thing, the smallest Concern as well as Things that seem weighty, proceeding from an *evil Root*; which nothing can manifest but an *inward Light*, shining in its Brightness. But with Sorrow may we say, it is rare to find one amongst many, who lives in the *Practice* of what they themselves acknowledge

ledge to be *right*. Who is there but will confess, that to speak the Truth on all Occasions is a *right* Thing? Who is there but will allow, that to keep every Promise, tho' it be to our Hurt, is an *honest* Thing? Who is there but will grant, that to do unto all Men as we would be done by, is a *just* Thing? Yet live not in the Practice thereof; and if we do not live in the Practice of what we know to be *right*, what doth our Knowledge *profit* us? We may, as *Israel* in the Wilderness did, keep moving; but unless we walk in the *narrow Way*, we can never come to a righteous Life.

And so if we do not wilfully shut our Eyes, we may plainly see, that the Way to a righteous Life, is to *walk in the Spirit*, to follow the Leadings of an *inward* Guide, to deny and turn from what the Light of Righteousness in our own Hearts *manifests* unto us to be *unrighteous, unjust, or dishonest*. And by turning from *Evil*, we come to embrace the *Good*; by forsaking *Vice*, we come to be filled with *Virtue*; by *dying* unto Sin, we come to be made *alive* unto Righteousness; Truth, Equity and
Honesty

Honesty comes to be uppermost, and we come to center there. And to such, as *Paul* said, *there is no Condemnation*, they have the Answer of a good Conscience, *Peace with God, and Peace in themselves, Peace whilst they are here, and Peace when they go hence.*

C O N-

CONSIDERATIONS

Grounded on the

Foregoing Discourse.

MA N *was made* (as many will acknowledge) *to glorify God, and to do his Will on Earth*: And that Man might be capable of serving his Creator, according to his Will, God gave him a Measure of his *good Spirit*, for an *Instructor*; so that there was in Man, as he was first created, much of God, much Humility and Meekness, much Truth and Faithfulness; much heavenly Wisdom and Understanding.

This *eternal Spirit* was to be Man's *Head and Leader, Man's Guide and Instructor*, in the Paths of Righteousness. On this *Spirit* Man was to fix his *Eye*; to this *Spirit* Man was to incline his *Ear*; by this *Spirit* Man was to be *govern'd*: And so following this Guide, this Leader, and this Instructor, Man
would

would have been capable of governing himself, and the Creation over which he was made *Lord*, according to the Will of God.

Did Mankind live under the Government of this *eternal Spirit*, we should all bear the Image of God, we should be all Godly, humble, lowly, meek, merciful, patient, peaceable, upright and faithful ; right in all our Ways, and just in all our Works.

But Man not keeping with this *Guide*, disobeyes the Command of his Maker, and by yielding himself Servant to another Master, another Spirit enters, as contrary in Nature as *Darkness* is to *Light* : And as many as follow this Leader, serve not the God of Heaven, but the God of this World ; for every Man is a Servant to whom he *obeys*.

Now we being all the Offspring of *Adam* in his fallen State, bear his Likeness ; we have all in ourselves, *Good* and *Evil*, a *Seed of Grace*, and a *Seed of Sin* ; called in Scripture, *Light* and *Darkness*, *Flesh* and *Spirit*, the *old Man* and *new Man* ; according to the Growth of these Seeds in us, and the Dominion
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that they come to have over us ; for as there is a Difference between a Seed and an Herb, a Plant and a Tree, a Child and a Man ; so there is a Difference in *Grace*, and also in *Sin* ; according to its Growth in us, so is the Strength thereof felt by us, and the Names given in Scripture are answerable thereto.

For though we all have a Seed of *Sin* in us, we are not over-master'd therewith, nor captivated thereby, as soon as we are born ; it must have a Time to spring and grow in us, before it comes to have Dominion over us. And I may say the same of the Seed of *Grace*, for it is also of a growing Kind ; otherwise the Kingdom of Heaven, or Government of Christ in the Hearts of his People, would not have been compared to the Seed of *Mustard*, which though it be but small when it is sown, yet through the springing and Growth thereof, comes to be of a high Stature.

We may find many in the World who are notoriously wicked, and much more wicked would they appear, were they not limited by an *outward Law* : These were not so born, it is the Growth
of

of Sin, and the Dominion that it comes to have over Men, that makes them notoriously wicked; for the Seed of Sin, as it comes to full Growth in any of the Sons and Daughters of Men, converts them into its own Nature, by which they come to be habitually active in Wickedness.

This was the Devil's Aim in *Adam's* Fall, but his Design being not then fully effected, he hath in all Ages of the World, and at this Day, doth follow the Sons and Daughters of Men, putting in their Minds evil Motions, attended with various Temptations, displaying false Colours, and putting a more beautiful Gloss on Things forbidden, than fallen Men can see in Paths of Righteousness. And all his evil Motions, Temptations, Baits, Snares, Lures, and false Colours, are to effect his *first* Design, that we being taken therewith, and led away thereby, might forget God, and cause him to take his holy Spirit from us; for till then, the God of this World can call no Man his own; we may be his Captives, but he hath not the whole Dominion over us.

In

In our present Age, *Light within, a Law within, Spirit within, Christ within*, is the Scoffing of some, and little regarded by many : But whether they know it or not, I must tell them, they scoff and slight the *chiefest* Treasure that ever the Soul of any Man was possess'd of, they slight the *Talent* that God hath given to every Man to improve, in order to our rising from our Fall, and returning to our native Country, to live under the Government of the *eternal Spirit* ; whosoever is without Spirit and *Light within*, is without God in the World. Take away this *Treasure*, and we shall have nothing in us that is *good*, we shall be left quite *graceless*.

We read of *Jacob* and *Esau*, who were lively Figures of these *two Seeds* in Man, how they struggled whilst they were in the Womb of *Rebekah*.

And as there was a Struggling between the Seed of *two Nations* in the Womb of *Rebekah* ; so there is a Struggling between the Seed of *two Kingdoms* in every Man, which shall rise to rule in us, and to have the whole Dominion over us.

As

As we are born into the World we are all *innocent* ; though we have a Seed of Sin *in* us, we are not actual Sinners until we *yield* to some sinful Motion proceeding therefrom ; which the Devil knows, though many are of another Perswasion : And that the Seed which he hath sown may spring and grow, that an evil Spirit may come to have the Rule in us, he begins to struggle betimes, before we well know the *right Hand* from the *left* : And where *Vice* is not kept down by careful Parents, or Guardians, it quickly gets head ; and such may say, as many do, *That there is no good Thing in us.* For through the speedy Growth of that which is *Evil*, they never have any Acquaintance with that which is *Good*, except *inward* Rebukes, which few will acknowledge to be of God.

For as Weeds left to grow in a Garden, overshadow and keep down Herbs that they cannot grow ; so doth *Vice suppress* Virtue, and makes God's Creation such Strangers to their Creator, that though in him they live, move,
C and

and have their Being, yet without Sense or Feeling of his Presence.

And as all *evil Motions* that lead unto Sin, all Baits, Snares and Lures that we meet with in the Course of our Lives, are the Strugglings and Strivings of the *evil Seed* ; so all *Calls* that we find in ourselves for Justice, Equity, Honesty, Truth and Faithfulness, with all *inward Checks*, Rebukes and Convictions, are the Strugglings and Strivings of the *good Seed* : For if these Things are hearken'd unto, obey'd, follow'd after, and liv'd in, it keeps down the *Growth of Vice* ; so that though we have a Root of Sin in us, it remains *powerless*, it doth not rise and come to reign over us.

In which *suppressing of Vice*, in order to the *Growth of Virtue*, Parents and Guardians ought to be much concerned : For as the wicked One takes the Advantage of our Childhood, to make us commit *Evil*, before we have any Acquaintance with that which is *Good* ; Parents and Guardians, like faithful Weeders, should eye, suppress, keep down, and use all Endeavours to root out every *Vice* as soon as it appears, till

Grace

Grace grows, and a *right* Spirit comes to reign in them, and have the Rule over them.

But this is our present State : As *Esau* by his struggling came to be the *First-born* in Days past ; so *Iniquity*, through the early Rising of the subtle Serpent, is the *First-born* still. And though most Parents, in the *Christian* World, are careful to provide Weeders betimes, almost as soon as a Child is born, but no Weeds do they root up ; and many Parents none at all ; by which great Neglect, most Children come to be wild, stubborn, self-willed, disobedient to Parents, and very ungodly in their Lives. But the Ground of all Ungodliness is the Growth of that Seed which the wicked One sow'd. And how may Vice be brought down when it is come to a *Head* ? Not by *Parents*, not by *Guardians*, not by *Sureties*, and I may say, not by *Preachers* : But as it was *Jacob* that supplanted *Esau*, so it must be *Grace* that must supplant Sin. We see, notwithstanding all Preaching, more Pride and Haughtiness, than *Humility* and *Meekness* ; more fraudulent

Dealing and contentious Practices, than *Self-denial* ; more seeking the World and the Vanities thereof, than the *Kingdom of Heaven* and the *Righteousness thereof*. And thus it will be whilst the First-born be uppermost.

And if we would have the First-born supplanted, if we would have that which strives to deprive us of Life, Light and Grace, and all Goodness, made *powerless* ; if we would have that suppress which continually labours to make us Servants to Sin, and Bond-slaves to Satan ; if we would see the Death of that which makes us incapable of glorifying God in our Lives ; if we would be, as the primitive *Christians* were, deliver'd from the Power of *Darkness*, and translated into the Kingdom of the dear *Son of God* ; to live under the Government of his *eternal Spirit*, which was Man's *first State* : Let us consider, how that which hinders came to rise, and by what Means it may be brought down.

I have said, and say it again, that it is not the *Indwelling*, but the *Growth* of an *evil Seed*, that makes the Sons and Daughters of Men proud, haughty, high-

high-minded, envious, cruel, merciless, fraudulent and ungodly ; darkening our Understandings, and making us Strangers to the *Gift of God in ourselves* ; and the Growth of this *evil* Seed stands in our often *yielding* to such *evil* Motions as proceed therefrom, and *that* the subtle Serpent knows ; and we may know it also, from the manifold Temptations we have thereunto, especially where he finds them to be effectual.

Who ever yielded to any *evil* Motion, committing Sin, and taking Pleasure therein, that hath not been tempted again to the *same* Thing ? Or who is there that doth not know, that the oftner we yield to any Temptation, the stronger our Temptations are, and the harder to be denied ? And by every *Yielding*, this Sin *riseth*, and comes to have *more* Power over us.

And if it be by our *yielding* to evil Motions that the evil Spirit riseth, and comes to have Power over us ; it must be by *denying* evil Motions that he must be supplanted, and made powerless in us.

Whosoever will be a Follower of Christ, must first learn to *deny* himself ; we must turn from whatsoever the *eternal Light* in our own Hearts *shews* us to be selfish, though it may seem never so much to our Disadvantage ; and by *denying* ourselves, we shall abundantly *deny* the Author of all *evil* Motions.

Pride, Pleasure, and unrighteous Gain, are Baits that have caught many ; all which, with many other Things, we must deny and turn from, if we will be Followers of Christ in a righteous Life : And by such *Denials* we shall find the Root of Iniquity wither, and Grace grow ; sinful Motions will diminish, and heavenly Desires increase ; the small Seed will become the tallest of Herbs ; and the Lump come to be one in Nature with the Leaven.

But this Denial must be whilst the *Cockatrice* is yet in the *Shell*, whilst Sin is in the *Motion*, before it comes to *Action* ; for sinful Motions may be turned *from*, but sinful Actions are past *Recal*. And what can shew us the *Rising* of evil Motions ? Preachers cannot, Books cannot ; nothing that is *without*
can

can effectually shew us what is *within* ; it must be an *inward Light*, it must be the *Candle* of the *Lord*, the *eternal Spirit*, that was in the Beginning given unto Man for an *Instructor*.

There was in the Creation good Men, faithful Men, self-denying Men, when there were no Preachers, nor Books, that we read of : And who was their *Teacher* but the *eternal Spirit* ? What *Guide* had they but the *Light* of *Righteousness* in their own Hearts ? And did our present Preachers make it their Concern, to turn People's Minds to eye this *inward Guide*, and to become faithful Followers thereof, we should have more good Men, faithful Men, and self-denying Men, than can now be found.

Men or Angels could not give better Advice to a People, that was turned to this *inward Light*, than *Paul* gave to the *Galatians*, when he exhorted them to *walk in the Spirit* : For if we are not guided by a right Spirit, we can never lead a righteous Life.

As the *Seed of Sin* grows and waxeth strong in us, by our *yielding* to evil Motions ; so the *Seed of Grace* grows

and waxeth strong in us by the *denying* of evil Motions ; the putting off of the old Man, is the putting on of the new ; and it is the new Man that makes any of us to be *new Creatures*, and to bring forth, in the Course of our Lives, a *new* and *heavenly Conversation*.

If we do not come to a *Denial* of evil Motions, and to live in a continual Exercise thereof, tho' we hear Preachers all the Days of our Lives, we shall be but as a Door on the Hinges, or as *Israel* in the Wilderness, often moving, yet as short of a righteous Life, as they that then came out of *Egypt* were of having peaceable Possessions in the *promised Land*.

We cannot come to a righteous Life, until our Lights shine with such Brightness, as that we can see the Rising of all evil Motions at a Distance ; for as Grace comes to be *uppermost*, the Root of Iniquity will be *lowermost* ; as the one comes to be *before* our Faces, the other will be *behind* our Backs.

Our Conversation is not in Heaven, 'till *Truth* comes to be in all our Words, *Equity* in all our Deeds, and *Faithfulness*
in

in all our Promises ; this makes the Sons and Daughters of Men a holy Nation, and a peculiar People ; this makes such as were *Heathens* to be true *Christians* ; and such as were the vilest of *Sinners*, worthy of the honourable Name of *Saints*.

Whence come Pride and Haughtiness, Contention and Strife, Fraud and Deceit, Oppression and Cruelty, but from the *Author* of all Wickedness ? Where the Flesh, with the Affections thereof, is crucified, such Things are not to be *found* ; and let us pretend to what Religion we will, whilst such Things are *practised*, we keep alive what ought to be *mortified*.

Where an *evil* Spirit is *uppermost*, Men know no Limit ; their Ears, Eyes, Tongues, Hands and Feet are at Liberty to hear evil Reports, behold Vanity, speak proudly, rashly, unadvisedly and deceitfully, to do Violence, take Bribes, and go where they list.

But where a *right* Spirit *rules*, every Member of the Body is under a Limit ; the Ear is turned from Fables, and the Eye from beholding Vanity ; they can-

not, as too many do, cover, dissemble and lye, to accomplish Self-ends: Vain Communication is not allow'd to come out of their Mouths, their Hands are limited from taking of Bribes, using of Violence, or doing any Wrong; the Paths of Rioters they cannot walk in, but are Lovers of Righteousness, and Haters of Iniquity in themselves and others. And to this Estate we might all come, by *denying* such Motions as the Light of Righteousness in our own Hearts *manifests* to be *evil*.

And now my Advice to all Professors of *Christianity* is, that instead of contending about *Forms* of Godliness, they take Heed to that in themselves which leads to Godliness; instead of searching the Scriptures for a *right Form*, they would labour to live under the Government of a *right Spirit*; for such are deliver'd from the Power of Darknes, and return'd to *Sion* the City of God, and to the *new Jerusalem*, where God is known and truly worshipped.

One Thing more I would have the Reader to consider, and that is this,
Though every Man that cometh into the
World

World is attended with two Spirits, yet can be have but one Lord, and he is Lord that bath the whole Rule over us.

The Right of Government in all Men, belongs to the *eternal Spirit*, that was with the *Father* before the World began, call'd in Scripture the *Spirit of Christ*; for that in *Jesus*, the second *Adam*, no other Spirit dwelt. He was not attended with two Spirits, as the Off-spring of fallen *Adam* are: He had not in himself Light and Darkness, Good and Evil, a Seed of Grace, and a Seed of Sin: *But he was* (as the Scripture saith) *full of Grace, and full of Truth*. In him was Life, even the Life that the first *Adam* lost, a *Spring of Righteousness*; and this Life he retain'd, though his Temptations far exceeded those of *Eve*: And so did keep out the evil Spirit, which is the Author of all Wickedness, tho' he lived many Years on Earth, and met with many Provocations; he was in the whole Course of his Life humble, lowly, meek, merciful, patient, peaceable, just and faithful, and therein fulfilled all Righteousness, and so did the Will of God on Earth.

And the *Seed of Grace* in every Man, is one in Nature with the *Fulness* that dwelt in him ; and as this Seed springs in any of us, and grows to Strength and Stature, it make us conformable to his Image. The more *Grace* any Man hath, the more humble, meek and merciful he is ; the more *Light* any of us have, the greater Discovery it makes of what is amiss in ourselves and others ; the more *Truth* dwells in us, the less Fraud and Deceit is wrought by us.

And as we walk in the *Light*, we shall grow in *Grace*, and add to our Faith Virtue, Knowledge, Temperance, Patience, Godliness, Brotherly - kindness and Charity ; *by which* (as Peter said) *an Entrance will be ministred unto us abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of Christ.* A *right Spirit* will come to be exalted in us, and to have the alone Rule and Government over us ; and under the Government of a *right Spirit*, we shall bring forth a *right Conversation*, acceptable in the Sight of God.

Now the Prince of Darkness being an Enemy to all Righteousness, useth all Endeavours to blind the Eyes of our Understanding,

Understanding, and to keep us Strangers to this righteous Seed, which is the Spring of all *Grace* and *Virtue*, that he may draw us away from God and all Godliness : And as such as walk in the Light of the Lord add *Virtue* to *Virtue*, until they are filled with *Righteousness* ; so such as follow the Leadings of an evil Spirit, add *Vice* to *Vice*, until they come to be filled with *Wickedness* ; and all such have likewise but *one* Lord, the Prince of the Power of Darkness hath the whole Rule over them. And these two States are called in Scripture *Life* and *Death*.

Every Man, as he cometh into the World hath, as I may say, Life and Salvation before him, Death and Destruction behind him, and both at a Distance from him : He hath also a good Spirit to conduct him in the Way of Life and Salvation, and an evil Spirit waits to lead him in Paths of Death and Destruction ; and most Men are Strangers to both, although they be in them. And the Preaching of the Gospel was, and ought still to be, *For the Opening of such blind Eyes, to see the Working*
of

of these two Spirits in themselves, and the Leadings thereof, that we might turn from the Evil, and become Followers of that which is good, that he, whose Right it is, might come to have the Rule in us and over us.

And certain I am, that tho' many are ignorant of these Things, many may be found that have some Sight, some Sense, and some Feeling of the *eternal Spirit of Jesus* : They have the Knowledge of something in themselves that calls for just Weights and an equal Balance, for doing unto all Men as they would be done by, for Truth in their Words, and Faithfulness in their Promises ; so that did they keep to this, they would follow a *right* Guide, and the Seed of Grace would *grow*, Truth and Faithfulness would *grow*, Knowledge, Temperance, Patience, Brotherly-kindness and Charity would *grow* ; and we should find in ourselves, *that an Entrance into the Kingdom of Christ would be abundantly ministred.*

But whilst the evil Spirit remains *unmortify'd*, Self stands in our Way, and to accomplish Self-ends, an equal Balance

lance is *not* kept, Justice is *not* done, Equity is *not* performed, Promises are *not* kept, Undertakings are *not faithfully* managed, the Fashions and Customs of this sinful World are *not* forsaken ; and that hinders the *Growth* of the righteous Seed : For as there was no bringing down of the *Canaanites* whilst there was an *accursed* Thing in the Camp ; so there is no bringing down the Strength of Sin whilst we have more Regard to *Self* than a *Saviour* ; and that which *manifests* Self is *Light*, by it we see to what every evil Motion doth lead, and walking in the *Light*, we walk in the Way of God's *Salvation*.

But some may say of this *eternal Light*, as wicked Men and Sons of *Belial* said of *Saul*, the Chosen of the Lord, *How shall this Man save us ? What can the taking heed to this Light advantage us ? We find in ourselves Rebukes for Sin, but we find nothing in ourselves to save us from Sin.*

To all such I have this to say, Christ was given to the *Gentiles* for a *Light* and for a *Leader*. Whilst we are in the Nature of the *Gentiles*, whilst we walk
after

after the Flesh, whilst we follow evil Motions, we are departed from God, we are Aliens from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, and are Strangers to the new Covenant that God made with the House of *Jacob* ; and in that State we cannot know Christ the Saviour of the World, any otherwise than a *Reprover* ; but those Reproofs being Reproofs of *Instruction*, are the Way to Life, even to that Life that the first *Adam* through Transgression lost.

For if at those Reproofs we turn from such Things as we are reprov'd for, whether it be *idle Communication, intemperate Living, unjust Dealing, Pride, Passion*, or any other *Vice*, that the evil Spirit of this World leads unto ; and follow after *Righteousness*, doing such Things as are *just, upright, honest*, and of good Report, Rebukes will cease, and our *Reprover* will become our *Leader* ; that which was behind our Backs, will be *before* our Faces, and that which would have led us, will *pursue* us, as *Pharaoh* pursued *Israel*, to bring us back to our old Manner of Living again, and then we shall find Christ to be

be our *Saviour*. As many as followed *Saul*, saw how he saved them from their *outward* Enemies ; and all that come to be Followers of the *eternal Spirit of Jesus*, do see how he saves them from *spiritual Enemies*.

Whilst we follow Motions of Sin, we follow a *wrong* Guide, and in that Path we may know the *prevailing* Power of Sin, but can never know the *restraining* Power of Grace.

It is to as many as *receive* Christ that he gives *Power*, and none receive him but such as turn from their Iniquities at his *Reproof*, and confide in him for a *Saviour* ; such truly believe in his Name.

I grant, that the *Shining* of an *inward* Light, which is the first *Manifestation* of Christ to the Sons and Daughters of Men, seems at first *small* and *powerless*, and so doth our *first* Motions to Sin ; but follow such sinful Motions as far as they will lead, and we shall find them powerful enough : May not many be found at this Day, even amongst us who are called *Christians*, so captivated under the Power of Sin, that a *Bond-slave*, who is held in Chains of
Iron,

Iron, can easier break his Bonds, arise, depart, and return unto his native Country, than they can cease from Iniquity, rise from their Fall, and lead a sober, righteous, godly Life.

And if the *Seed of Sin* comes by our following the Motions thereof, to have such Power over us, why may not the *Seed of Grace*, if we return thereunto and become Followers thereof, have as much Power over us.

Undoubtedly *John*, who had travelled from *Death to Life*, and was an Eye-witness of Things as they were in the Beginning, felt in himself such a Power when he said, *Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit Sin, for his Seed remains in him, and he cannot sin.* And many living Witnesses may be found, at this Day, who can say from a sensible Experience, *That where this righteous Seed is risen, and comes to have Dominion, it is so powerful and restraining, that they cannot be unjust in their Dealings, nor unfaithful in their Promises; they cannot tell an Untruth, though never so much to their outward Advantage; they cannot be intemperate, wasting the good Creatures*
that

that God hath given for our Nourishment, by excessive Eating and Drinking ; they cannot oppress the Poor, the Widow, and Fatherless, nor take by Violence that which they have no Right unto : The small Seed in them is become the tallest of Herbs, and hath as much Power over them, as Sin hath over such who dwell therein.

These are, as the *Colossians* were, delivered from the *Power of Darknes* ; these have, as the *Philippians* had, their *Conversation in Heaven* ; these glorify God in their *Lives*, and so answer the End of their *Creation*.

Much Preaching hath made many *godly Talkers* ; but it is *Grace* in the *Heart*, and *Truth* in our *inward Parts*, that makes *godly Livers* ; and to a Fulness of this heavenly *Treasure* no Man can attain, but by *denying* such *Motions* as the *eternal Light of Righteousness* in our *inward Parts*, shews us to be *unjust* and *dishonest* ; for in *denying* the *Evil*, we *choose* the *Good* ; and as the *Growth of Sin* stands in our *ill-doing*, so the *Growth of Grace* stands in our *well-doing*.

Our

Our Ancestors have told us, *That there was more Honesty and Plain-dealing amongst Men in Ages past, when there was less Preaching, than can be found amongst Men now.* And their Saying I can easily believe; knowing that it is a *true Self-denial*, and not the *bearing* of Preachers, that must *mortify Sin*, change our Natures, and make us *new Creatures*, which is the Ground of all Honesty and Plain dealing.

And of this *true Self-denial*, I am apt to think, we have much *less* than former Generations had; for we see, tho' Preaching *abounds*, Pride, covetous Practices, with many other Vices, *super-abound*; and the Reason to me is this, *Conformity to outward Forms of Worship*, being more taking with People than the *strait Gate and narrow Way of Self-denial*, hath in our present Age gotten the Name of *Religion, Christianity*, and *true Godliness*: Infomuch, that should a Man add to his Faith *Virtue*, and all other *Graces*, by which an Entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of Christ is abundantly ministred, if there be not withal a *Conformity to some out-ward*

ward Way of Worship, he shall not pass for a godly Man. Nay, tho' his *Conversation* be never so *heavenly*; tho' he be humble, lowly, meek, patient, peaceable; though Truth be in all his *Words*, Equity and Faithfulness in all his *Deeds*; tho' he *visits* the Fatherless and the Widow, and keeps himself *unspotted* from the World; if he be not in the Exercise of some *outward* Form of Godliness, he shall not be counted *religious*, nor hardly a *Christian*.*

Conformity in every Sect, Opinion or Persuasion, is become the *Character* of a *religious* Man, and the only *Band* of Unity and Brotherhood; if this *fail*, there soon comes an *Estrangedness*: And so there is much pressing into *Conformities*, but little minding the *Mortification* of Sin, in order to a Life of Righteousness. But let our Zeal for *Conformity* be never so *much*, it is he that ordereth his
Conversation

* But it is not hereby intended to discourage the Assembling of ourselves together, for the publick Worship of Almighty God, agreeable to the Advice of the Apostle, *Heb. x. 25*.

Conversation aright, that shall *see* the Salvation of God.

The *Conformity* that the living Lord *requires*, is a *Conformity* to the *Image* of Christ in the Course of our *Lives*, to be *holy* as he was *holy*; without which we cannot be, as the primitive *Christians* were, of the *Household* of God; we are not come to the *new Jerusalem*, and so cannot be Fellow-Citizens with *Saints*. Though we bear the primitive *Christians* Name, we are not in the primitive *Christians* Nature; the First-born is not so brought down, as to have a right Spirit alone to *rule* in us, and to have the *Dominion* over us.

If the Sayings contained in this Book seem strange unto the *Reader*, it is because the *Reader* is a *Stranger* to the primitive *Christians* Life: If he who was their Head and Leader, were become ours; had we Fellowship with them, as they had with *Christ*; we should have an Echo in ourselves, answering to what is here said; our Hearts would say, *It is so*.

And the *Way* to come to their righteous Life, is to walk in the *Light*, denying

nying and turning from the least Thing that it shall *manifest* unto us to be *evil*: At the Beginning of our Journey, it will seem a *strait* and *narrow Way*; but after we have travelled on a while, we shall run therein with *great Delight*. For the Kingdom of Heaven, or Christ's Government by his eternal Spirit in the Hearts of his People, doth not consist of Righteousness alone: The Righteousness that proceeds from a right Spirit, is accompany'd with *Peace* and *Joy*: As Ill-doing is attended with *Trouble* and *Sorrow*, Well-doing is attended with *Peace* and *Joy*. All the Pleasures of Wickedness, that the whole World affords, is not to be compared to the Joys of a righteous Life. Every evil Motion we deny, in Obedience unto Christ, affordeth a superior Joy to that a Warrior hath in Battle, when his Enemy *flies* before him.

The *Jews* counted themselves more holy than the *Gentiles*, tho' both made of one Blood; and as both were the Off-spring of *Adam*, both had in themselves Good and Evil. But to the *Jews* the Lord gave *Laws, Statutes, and Judgments,*

ments, for a *Rule* of Righteousness ; and they conforming thereunto in Worship and outward Services, counted themselves, as we who are called *Christians* do, *holier* than the *Heathen*.

But this was a Self-Perfwasion in the *Jews*, and no better in us who are called *Christians*, whilst we continue in a State of Degeneration : For no *outward* Conformity, without *inward* Sanctification, can make any Man holy, and no Man is *sanctified*, till Sin is *mortified*.

When the *Heathen*, thro' the Preaching of the Gospel, turned from their Darkness, and came to be Followers of the *eternal Spirit*, thereby mortifying the Strength of Sin, they were more holy than many of the *Jews*, and called by the best Apostle *Saints* ; which was more suitable than the Name of *Christians* ; which was at first given in Derision to the Followers of *Christ*, by the unconverted *Heathen* at *Antioch*, and but once sincerely mentioned in all the Scripture ; but the Name of *Saints* is peculiar to all truly sanctified Souls.

As *Circumcision* gave many the Name of *Jews*, so the imitating of *John's* Baptism

Baptism hath given many the Name of *Christians*; but nothing can give *Jew* or *Christian* the Name of a *Saint* in Truth, but an Heart made pure, single, upright and honest, through the Mortification of Sin, call'd in Scripture the *Baptism of the Holy Ghost*; for that is effected not by any outward Means, but by our walking after the Holy Ghost: 'Till this is wrought, though we have a *Christian* Name, we cannot bring forth a heavenly Conversation, and so the Name profiteth little.

For we who are called *Christians*, as we are born into the World, have in ourselves a Seed of Sin as well as others, and for want of faithful Weeders to root up Vice as it appears, Iniquity grows to that Height, that nothing less than the *powerful Spirit of Christ* can bring it down; and from such who remain Strangers to the Working of this Spirit a Cry hath gone forth, *That there is no Freedom from Sin on this Side the Grave*: But the *Colossians*, who were delivered from the Power of Darkness, knew better Things; and so should we, if we did turn from Iniquity, acquaint our-

selves with their Guide, and walk in Newness of Life.

A numberless Number at this Day bear the *Christian* Name, for that it is easily obtained ; nothing is required at the receiving of it but *Promises* : But small is the Number of *Saints*, for that no Man can be a *Saint* but by a *Performance* of those *Promises* ; and *that* no Man *can* do, until we turn to *that* in ourselves which *manifests* the Works of the Devil, and on Discovery thereof, deny, turn from, and quite forsake them. By taking this Way, and using this Means, Sin will certainly be *mortified*, the Soul *sanctified*, and such as were *Sinners* will come to be *Saints*.

But as nothing discouraged the Camp of *Israel* from going up to possess the Land of *Canaan*, more than the *Report* that ten Spies gave of the *Strength* of the *People* that dwelt therein ; so nothing discourageth awaken'd Souls from pressing after a Life of Righteousness, more than the *Report* that hath been given by *Professors* of Godliness, concerning the *Strength* of Sin, *that it could not be overcome* ; when they that so reported, never made

made *Trial* in the Way of God's *Salvation*.

All the Spies spake *well* of the Land, as all Sorts of People now *do* of a sober, righteous, godly Life and Conversation : All will *commend* Humility, Meekness, Moderation, Temperance, Patience, Chastity, and, above all, plain, upright, honest, just Dealings, though they do not *practise* it ; and nothing hinders but this, *the evil Spirit of this World is uppermost*, and few endeavour in God's Way to bring it *down*.

Had the Camp of *Israel* made them a Captain, and gone back into *Egypt*, they could never have *subdued* the *Canaanites* : And whilst we allow ourselves to *live* in Sin, it is impossible we should *subdue* it, for we *strengthen* what we should *mortify*. The *Canaanites* were made weak by a War, and so must the Strength of Sin, with this Difference, *theirs* was an *actual War*, and *ours* must be *defensive*. When by the Candle of the Lord, that shines in our Souls, we see an *aspiring Thought*, a *lustful Desire*, a *covetous Inclination*, or any other *evil Motion* ; if we stand on our Guard,

and *deny* it Entrance into our Affection, it will *retreat*, and after many Attempts being still put back, will hardly attempt any more ; at most, the Motions thereof will be but *weak*.

Whilst there was an *accursed* Thing in the Camp, the Enemy prevailed, and *Israel* retreated : And so it is at this Day ; if we cover, if we hide, if we justify what our own Hearts condemn, the Evil *prevails*, and the Good *retreats*.

Let us but *accustom* ourselves to true Denials, and the Strength of Sin will, from Day to Day, be *weaken'd* ; and as *Joshua* and *Caleb* said, *The Lord will be with us* ; his Grace will be in our Hearts, and his Fear before our Eyes, Truth, Equity and Honesty will be *uppermost* ; and then it will be as *easy* to lead a sober, righteous, godly Life, as ever it was to live a loose and ungodly Life : For tho' something of Sin may remain in us, as some of the *Canaanites* remain'd in the good Land, it will be *powerless* as they were ; and all our *Members* that were Servants to Sin, will become Servants to *Righteousness*, as it
is

is written, *The Elder shall serve the Younger.*

But if we rebel against the Lord, by joining with Motions of Sin, as many who are call'd *Christians*, as well as *Heathens*, do, this War will be over before it is begun ; that which is uppermost, will continue so ; and as we *live*, so we shall *die*, receiving Wages not according to our *Words*, but according to our *Works* : And then we shall know that a *Christian Name*, without a *Christian Conversation*, will stand us in *little* stead ; for it is not he that is *overcome*, but he that *overcometh*, that the *second Death* shall not hurt.



P A U L's
S P E E C H
TO THE

BISHOP of CRETE:

OR,

The ANCIENT CHRISTIANS

Principle, or Rule of good Living,
reviv'd and brought to Light,
through the continued Appearance
and Operation of

Inward *and* Spiritual Grace,

SET FORTH

By ANSWERS to Nine weighty
QUESTIONS, with all Brevity
and Plainness. Worthy to be taken
Notice of by the whole Creation of
Mankind, and is of special Use to as
many as are awaken'd unto Right-
teousness, and desire to know the
Way of God's Salvation.

By HUGH TURFORD.

L O N D O N :

Printed by MARY HINDE, 1771.

P A U L
S P E E C H

Harbor of CRYSTAL

The ANTIQUITY OF THE
Harbor of CRYSTAL
and the
Harbor of CRYSTAL



By A. S. W. ...
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Not ... by the ...
M. ... and ...
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Printed by M. J. ...
LONDON

TO THE
READER.

MOST Men have learned to speak well of Grace, but few of them can tell us what it is, or where it may be found : Many will acknowledge it to be the Gift of God ; yet think to have it from the Lips of Men : Many are persuaded, that all Wickedness is for Want of Grace ; yet, through their Ignorance, slight the Appearances thereof in themselves : Many are convinced, that there is a Sufficiency therein, were it before Mens Faces, to preserve them from great Sins ; but cannot believe there is a Sufficiency therein to save from any Sin. Which plainly shews, that their speaking well of Grace is from Hear-say, and not from Experience.

This little Treatise sheweth, what Grace is, where it may be found, and how it

comes to be before Mens Faces ; that it is the only Saviour from Sin, and so the true Salvation. For whosoever is saved from Sin here, shall certainly be saved from Death and Condemnation hereafter : And that many may come to be Witnesses of this Salvation, is the Desire of.

H. T.

PAUL's

P A U L's
S P E E C H
TO THE
BISHOP of CRETE.

PAUL, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, writing to *Titus* the first Bishop of *Crete*, had this Saying.

The Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all Men, teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World.

From which weighty Sayings these following Questions arise.

Quest. 1. *What is the Grace of God?*

Ans. The Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, is no less than a *divine* Inspiration, the Gift of God to the Sons and Daughters of Men, an *Adversary* to

the Devil, a *Destroyer* of Sin, and the only *Saviour* of Mankind therefrom.

The Gift of *Grace*, under the Gospel Administration, is the fulfilling of that promised Covenant which God, by the Mouth of his Prophet *Jeremiah*, promised to make with the House of *Jacob*, which was, *That he would write his Law in their Hearts, and put his Spirit in their inward Parts*; that his People might have a Rule of Righteousness in themselves to guide their Steps by.

As the Princes of the Earth rule and govern their People by an *outward* Law, so the Lord resolved to rule and govern his People by an *inward* Law: They should have no Need to turn over the Leaves of a *Book*, as the Seed of *Abraham*, under the first Covenant, had, to know how they should walk in *right* Paths; but they should know, by looking into their *own* Hearts, what was *right*, and what was *wrong*; what they *might* do, and what they should *leave* undone; what was *just*, and what was *unjust*; what was *pleasing* to God, and what was *not*: For this Law is a *Light*, that enlightens Men's

Men's Souls, as the Sun in the Firmament enlighteneth our Houses, shewing what is *clean*, and what is *unclean*; what may *remain*, and what is to be *swept out*.

For as God made Man in the Beginning humble, lowly, meek, merciful, pure, peaceable, just and faithful; so he would have all Men to be. But forasmuch as nothing less than the *good Spirit* of God, in the *inward* Parts of Man, can reduce any of us to such a Qualification, God hath given to every Man a *Measure* thereof, to *enlighten* their Understandings, and to *guide* them in the Path of Life and Salvation; and this *Measure* being the free Gift of God, is by the Apostle in the Text, and many other Places of Scripture, call'd *Grace*.

Quest. 2. *Where doth the Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, appear?*

Ans. 'The great God, in his infinite Wisdom and everlasting Love, hath placed his royal Seed and Plant of Renown in the Hearts of the Sons and Daughters of Men, for that is the chief Garrison of the Soul; there the *Grace* of God, that bringeth Salvation, may be

be found ; from thence, until it come to be vail'd by Clouds of Iniquity, it shews itself a Witness against all Unrighteousness and Ungodliness.

As every evil Motion and Temptation that leads to Sin, appears *within* ; so the *Grace* of God, that is given to Men to save from Sin, appears also *within*.

There is not a Man born into the World, if he have liv'd to *commit* Sin, but hath felt and known in himself *Rebukes* for Sin ; and these *Rebukes* are the *Appearances* of *Grace*, and call'd in Scripture *Light*, and *true Light*, for that it manifests every Work of Darknes ; it shews us both *when* and *wherein* we have done amiss : And this it hath been in all Ages.

God hath not in any Age left himself without a *Witness* in the Hearts of Men, to declare his Righteousness, Truth and Faithfulness. But there is as much Difference between the *Appearance* of *Grace*, and the *Power* of *Grace* to Salvation, the *Light* of Righteousness, and that *Fulness* which enables us to *lead* a Life of Righteousness, as is
between

between a *Seed* that is *sown*, and the *Herb* when 'tis come to *full Growth*; but the one leads to the other: And it is he that attains to the *Fulness of Grace*, that comes to lead a sober, righteous, godly Life in this present World.

It was said of *Jesus*, the second *Adam*, *That he was full of Grace*; and we may believe it from the Fruits he brought forth in this Life: He was humble, lowly, meek, patient, peaceable, just and faithful; he resisted the Devil in all his Temptations, led a blameless Life, fulfill'd all Righteousness, and in the whole Course of his Life retain'd what the first *Adam* soon lost, *namely*, the *Image of God*: And whosoever grows in *Grace* until he attains to his Stature, *namely*, to be filled therewith, may be called as *Job* was, *A perfect Man*.

And as the Appearances of *Grace* are *inward*, so is all its Discoveries, Revelations and Teachings; whosoever applies himself to Man for a *right Knowledge* of the Things of God, goes to a wrong School; *For*, as *Paul* truly said, *that which may be known of God, is manifest within*.

The

The Proud, the Covetous, the Envious, and other ungodly Persons, may for a Time, and a *long* Time, have the Appearances of *Grace*; they may have Rebukes for Sin, but if by such Rebukes they do not learn Righteousness, they grow not in *Grace*, neither doth *Grace* grow in them; all such hide their Talent, and in Time, for want of Improvement, come to have it quite taken from them; and being left Graceless, lead a wicked and ungodly Life in this present World.

Quest. 3. *If the Grace of God appears unto all, and if there be a Sufficiency therein to make Men godly, How comes it to pass, that there are so many ungodly?*

Ans. As the *Grace* of God that bringeth Salvation, appears unto all Men, so Motions of Sin, that lead to Destruction, appear unto all Men, and commonly make the first Appearance. All Men have evil Motions and Temptations in themselves to Sin, before they are acquainted with any Rebukes in themselves for Sin; and the Work of the Devil is to make forbidden Things, appear

appear *desirable*, the World and the Vanities thereof to be *full* of Pleasantness : And as our Affections come to be taken therewith, as we make the World our *Delight*, and pursue after it, we depart from God ; and tho' Grace may make many Appearances, though the good Spirit of God may long strive with us, tho' we have in ourselves many Checks and Rebukes, and are thereby made sensible that our Ways and our Doings displease God, yet are we prone to persevere therein ; and through a continued Perseverance, Sin grows and comes to have Dominion over us : And the Devil making one ungodly Person a Bait to catch another, is the very Cause why we have so many ungodly Livers in the World.

The further any Man goeth from God and Godliness, the less Desire he hath to return ; and the more Delight we take in the Vanities of this World, the less Felicity we behold in the Things of God. And as long as one Spark of *Grace* remains, the Devil will follow all such with his Temptations ; for that he can call none really his own, until

until they become quite graceless; and many such graceless Ones would be apparently found, were not Wickedness limited by an outward Law.

Were we, as *Israel* once was, without a King; or as the Inhabitants of *Laiſh*, who had no Magistrate in the Land, to put them to Shame for any Thing; we should find many who bear the *Christian* Name to be of the Devil's Nature, working all manner of Wickedness. And so it highly concerns all who have the Appearances of *Grace*, from the Rebukes thereof to learn Righteousness, that it may grow in them, and be their Guide: For nothing but *Grace*, and Obedience unto Righteousness, makes any of us differ from the worst of Men in vile Actions; for as all Righteousness proceeds from a Fulness of *Grace*, so the Aboundings of Wickedness is through a Deprivation of *Grace*.

Quest. 4. *What Manner of Salvation doth the Grace of God bring?*

Ans. As the Appearances of *Grace* are Rebukes for Sin, so the Salvation that *Grace* brings, is a saving from Sin.

If *Grace* teacheth Men to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World, *Grace* saves good Men from Sin in this present World.

We read of an Angel that appear'd to *Joseph*, saying, *Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy Wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost, and she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his Name JESUS, for he shall save his People from their Sins.*

Nothing defaceth the Image of God in Man but Sin, nor can any thing recover that Image again, but our being saved from Sin.

The Mortification of Sin brings Men to their Beginning : The more humble, lowly, meek and merciful any Man is, the more he resembles his Maker ; the more patient, peaceable, just, upright, and faithful any Man be found, the more conformable he is to the Life and Nature of Christ.

Paul told the *Ephesians*, that they were *saved* by *Grace* ; and what were they *saved* from, but from the Power of Sin and Satan ? And where was this *Grace* but in their own Hearts ? Before they

they came, through turning from their Iniquities, to have *Grace* in their Hearts, they walked, as Thousands now do, according to the Course of the World, not *denying*, but fulfilling the Desires of their Minds ; and all such are, as they then were, without *Christ*, without *Light*, without *Life*, without the Sense or Feeling of any thing *in* them that was of God ; Aliens from the Government of Christ's eternal Spirit in their *inward* Parts, and Strangers from the promised Covenant ; knowing no more of a Law in their Hearts to guide their Steps by, than the ungodly Men of this Age do.

But when they came to be *quickned* by Christ, and to have in their own Hearts his *good Spirit*, and to be *led* thereby, they were saved *from* Sin, they came to have *new Natures*, and so to be *new Creatures* ; and then they were no longer Strangers to Christ's Government by a Law in themselves, but Subjects to Righteousness, Citizens with Saints, and of God's Family. To which blessed State we might all come, did we but embrace the *Gift* of God for our Salvation, and give ourselves up to be taught

taught and guided thereby ; which would be our Wisdom, since nothing else can subdue *Satan*, save from Sin, and enable us to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World.

Saving from Sin, on this Side the Grave, may to such as are *Strangers* to God's Salvation, seem an incredible Thing ; but were they so well acquainted with the Power of *Grace*, as too many are with the Strength of Sin, they would say, *Christ's Yoke was easy*.

Hath it not been the Saying of many ungodly Men, *That they would amend their Lives, if they had but Power*.

Where any Heart, through a Perseverance in Sin, comes to be filled with Unrighteousness, *Sin* and *Satan* hath such Power over the Faculties of their Souls, that they cannot resist evil Motions and Temptations, but must yield thereunto, and suffer themselves to be led away thereby, though they know it is to evil Practices.

And if *Sin* hath such Dominion over ungodly Men, why may not *Grace* have as much Dominion over godly Men ? Surely good *Joseph* found such a Power

in his Soul, when he said, *How can I do this Evil, and sin against God.*

Grace being a *divine* Inspiration, commands the Hearts of all good Men, and the Heart being the chief Garrison of the Soul, commands every Member of the Body, holding them in with Bit and Bridle.

The Ear of a gracious Man is *shut* from hearkening to Fables and evil Reports; his Eye *is turned aside* from gazing upon Vanity; his Tongue is not *suffer'd* to Curse, Swear, Lye, or to be employed in any idle Communication; the Hand is *limited* from taking of Bribes to pervert Justice, and from taking by Violence, or otherwise, any Thing that is not our own; the Feet are *restrained* from going with the Drunkard to Excess, or with a lewd Woman to the Chamber of Wantonness, or with rude Persons to Rioting, Revelling, or any other rude Exercise. And by this Dominion that *Grace* comes to have over us, the Lord saves his People from their Sins. And as we live in Subjection to this Power, we are Servants to another Prince; *Sin* and *Satan* have

have lost their Dominion over us: And this is God's Salvation; by this we come to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World.

Quest. 5. Who did the Apostle mean when he said, Teaching us; was it the World in general, or only some Particulars?

Ans. Christ was given as a *Light* to the *Gentiles*, to which as they became obedient, he was also their *Leader* out of all Ungodliness, and they came to live under the Government of his eternal Spirit in their own Hearts; for such only the Lord owns for his People, and none but such can call him *Lord* in Truth.

Grace appears unto all Men; every one that is born into the World hath a *Light* in his Soul, that shews him the Motions of Sin, and rebukes him when and as oft as he yields thereunto.

All Righteousness is learned out of the *Book* of the *Law*, when it comes to be written in our Hearts; but that Law being the Law of the Spirit of Life, we must be quickened by Christ, and

and have the Spirit of Life, before we can learn from that *Law*.

Our Ancestors made it their Concern to teach Youth *good Manners*, as Temperance, Moderation, Chastity, civil Behaviour, to be *dutiful* to Parents, to *show* Respect to their Elders, to be *circumspect* in their Communication, *swift* to hear, *slow* to speak, to *answer* with Meekness and Gravity, to be *true* to their Trust, *faithful* in their Promises, *just* in their Dealings, keeping to their *Word* in all Things, that their *Word* might be taken in all Cases without Doubt or Scruple; every one to know their Place, and abide therein.

Now as we turn from Ungodliness to Sobriety, we bring forth all these Fruits in our Lives; for *Grace* teacheth all this, and much more: But since we find so few thus qualified, we may certainly conclude, that tho' *Grace* appears unto all, all are not obedient thereto.

Quest. 6. *We must confess that we have known inward Rebukes for Sin; we have been check'd, reprov'd, and convicted in ourselves after we have done amiss; but we have not found any Thing in and of ourselves,*

ourselves, when strong Motions and Temptations have arisen in our Minds, to restrain us with Bit and Bridle from doing amiss; and to deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts in our own Strength, seems too hard for any Mortal; especially when any lordly Sin hath got the Dominion over us: What can we do in such a Case?

Ans. Could Man in his own Strength deliver his Soul from under the Power of Sin and Satan, return unto God, and lead a sober, righteous, godly Life in this present World, there would have been no Need of a Redeemer, no Occasion for a Saviour, no Use of a quickening Spirit to give Life to our Souls, no Necessity of God's writing his Law in our Hearts, for a Rule to guide our Steps by, no Want of a Light in our Souls to shew us where the Devil spreads his Net, casts his Bait, lays his Gin, and displays his false Colours; but Man can no more deliver his Soul from the Power of Sin and Satan without the Help of the Lord, than Israel, when they were in Egypt, could go free from the Servitude of Pharaoh without his Help; therefore Grace appears unto all Men for their Aid.

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And though the Appearance of *Grace* may seem but small Aid to set our Souls free from the Servitude of *Sin* and *Satan*, and to conduct us in the Way of Life and Salvation, till we come to the End of our Race, to live under Christ's Government: It is not smaller than *Israel's* Aid was, to bring them from under the Servitude of *Pharaoh*, and conduct them to the promised Land.

Israel's Aid was but two aged Men, the younger of them being about Eighty Years old, having no Weapon but a Rod in one of their Hands; yet by this small Means, *God being with them*, they brought from under the Power and Servitude of *Pharaoh*, six Hundred Thousand Men, besides Women and Children; and *Grace* being a divine Inspiration, is Aid enough to bring six Hundred Thousand Millions from under the Servitude of *Sin* and Power of *Satan*, did Men but confide therein, and give themselves up to be guided thereby.

Inward Rebukes, if we have Regard thereunto, begets a Fear in Men, as the shaking of the Rod doth in Children;

and

and as the *Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom*, so it is the Beginning of a *Reformation of our Lives*.

If I am check'd in myself for making a *Lye*, and have Regard to that which check'd me, I shall be afraid of making *another* ; or if I find in myself Rebukes for not keeping my *Promise*, or for doing any thing *amiss*, and have Regard to such Rebukes, I shall be afraid to do the like, lest the next Rebukes be *sharper* ; and as this holy Fear abides in us, we come to *deny* Ungodliness, and in denying Ungodliness we *learn* Righteousness : But such as find in themselves Rebukes for Sin, and have no Regard thereunto, are like unto Children that carry Horn-books at their Sides, and learn nothing therein ; they are no Scholars in the School of *Grace*.

We have read, that *Reproofs of Instruction are the Way to Life*, and many good Men may be found at this Day, who will acknowledge, that they had never come to a Life of Righteousness, had they not had Reproofs of Instruction from their own Hearts, by which they came to deny Unrighteousness.

For where Rebukes for Sin are received in Love, the Lord doth not leave such Souls, but follows them therewith ; and the more Vices we subdue, the more in the Light of the Lord shall we see, and the more Power shall we receive from him to overcome them.

If one Plague will not make *Pbarao* willing to let *Israel* go, he shall have another, and another, until he be willing ; and if one Rebuke will not make us willing to part with a beloved Sin, we shall have another, yea *Trouble* and *Terror*.

Paul knew *Terror* before he came to find *Peace* with God, and *Peace* in his own Conscience ; he was acquainted with *Judgment*, before he came to obtain *Victory* ; nothing hath Power to break the Bonds of Captivity, and set us free from the Law of Sin and Death, but the Law of the Spirit of Life in our own Hearts.

Israel's main Enemies were not subdued as soon as they came out of *Egypt*, but when they came into the promised Land ; neither is the Body of Sin made weak as soon as we turn from Unrighteousness

ousness, but when we come into the Life of Righteousness, to have *Grace* before our Faces, as *Joshua* was before their Faces; for Sin cannot stand in the Face of Righteousness, no more than the *Canaanites* could stand in the Face of *Joshua*.

And if any lordly Sin hath got Dominion over us, I shall not say as one formerly said, *Fight not with Great nor Small, but with the King of Israel*: But rather, when violent Motions arise, *stand still*, and the Lord will fight for us; for as our Hearts come to be possess'd with *Grace*, if the Enemy should come in as a Flood, the Spirit of the Lord being in our inward Parts, will lift up a Standard against him.

The Lord's Controversy is not, as Men vainly imagine, against the *Sinner*, but against the *Author of Sin*; his Appearances are all in Love to save the Sinner, and by his Judgments to weaken the Strength of Sin: For Man once freed from Sin, is as willing to lead a righteous Life, as any ungodly Man can be to lead a wicked Life, and

more Joy he hath, though the World cannot see it.

Quest. 7. *What may truly and properly be called a sober, righteous, godly Life?*

Ans. A sober Life, many may in some measure be acquainted with, but a righteous, godly Life, is rarely considered.

Devotion, which consists in hearing of *Sermons*, reading of good *Books*, performing of *Family Duties*, &c. hath for many Ages been accounted *Godliness*, and the Practitioners thereof, *righteous People*.

These Things are not to be discommended, where they are done in *Sincerity*; but these are not the *true Character* of Righteousness and Godliness.

This and much more might be found amongst the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, yet Jesus told his Disciples, that *Except their Righteousness exceeded the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, they could in no wise enter into the Kingdom of God*.

And who is there amongst us, that are called *Christians*, but one Day in seven will be in the *Exercise*, of something that is called *Godliness*, tho' they have

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not learned to deny Ungodliness ; and such as have not learned to deny Ungodliness, are far from such a righteous, godly Life, as the *Grace* of our *Lord Jesus Christ* teacheth all its Followers.

One Way to know what is righteous and godly, is to consider what is unrighteous and ungodly, for the one is opposite to the other as *Light* to *Darkness* : And these that follow, most will acknowledge to be unrighteous and ungodly, viz.

Drunkennes, Whoredom, Theft, Envy, Hatred, Bloodshed, Swearing, Cursing, Lying, Extortion, Fraud, Double-dealing, Tale-bearing, and Whispering, which is the Seed of Strife ; all these Things are unrighteous, and *Pride* above many Evils *most* ungodly.

These are not Fruits proceeding from the good Spirit of God, but from the evil Spirit of this World ; not Issues of Life, but Streams that flow from a corrupt Spring ; these come not from the Teaching of *Grace* in our Hearts, but from evil Motions that arise in our Minds ; these make Men Sinners before the Lord ; and as long as we live in

the Practice of any of them, we shall not be righteous in his Sight : Those that brought forth Fruits of this Kind, have in all Ages in the World been testified against as unrighteous and ungodly Livers. These are Infirmities of the Soul, that Millions of Money have been given to Physicians to cure, but behold *Health* hath not been by them *restored*. These are Weeds that Thousands have been hired to pluck up, but to this Day have not made clean Gardens, nor never will by all the Art they have, for *Christ* is the *Physician* of *Souls*, none can take away the Sins of the World, but him alone.

Whosoever thinks to attain to a righteous, godly Life, but by the *Teachings* of *Grace* in his own Heart, deceiveth his own Soul.

Men may lop, or hinder the Growth of many Branches of Iniquity that appear outwardly, but cannot take away the Cause which is *within* ; and until the Cause is removed, there can be no thorough Cure.

As *Grace* hath a Spring, so Iniquity hath a Root, and the Axe that smites

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at this Root is in Christ's Hands ; and what is the Axe, but the *Law* of the Spirit of Life, a Law of Righteousness in our inward Parts ? This wrought a perfect Cure in *Paul*, this made him a free Man, a good Man, and a Preacher ; and that which cured *Paul*, and set him free from the Power of Sin, hath a Sufficiency in it to set all Men free therefrom.

Walk in the Spirit, said *Paul*, and ye shall not fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh ; that is the only Remedy, that is the Soul-healing Salve ; and what is this *walking in the Spirit*, but following the *Leadings of Grace* in our own Hearts ? For *Grace*, as it comes to have the Rule over us, brings down all exalted Thoughts, abateh Pride, shuts out Covetousness, gives no Place unto Wrath, reduceth us to a cool, quiet Frame of Spirit, in which Frame we can bear and suffer. *Grace* will not suffer us to do any unjust Thing, nor allow us to speak an ill Word, much less to be drunk, commit Whoredom, steal, or any such abominable Vices ; for it is the promised Spirit of Truth

that leads into all Truth, leads out of all Error, and so brings Salvation indeed.

No Man can lead a righteous Life, till a right Spirit comes to have the whole Possession of his Heart ; for from the good Treasures of the Heart proceed all good Living ; for that is the Guide, and this Guide being a divine Nature, makes us to be heavenly-minded.

Nothing exceeds the Righteousness of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, but the Righteousness that proceeds from a *right* Spirit in our own Hearts ; for that is not our own Righteousness, but the Righteousness of Christ.

As *Murder*, *Adultery*, *Theft*, which are some of the worst of Evils, proceed out of the Heart, whilst the evil Spirit of this World hath the Possession thereof ; so *Good-will* to all Men, which is a principal Virtue, proceeds out of the Heart, when the good Spirit of God comes to make its Abode there ; but this Abode is not known till by denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, the Spirit of this World is denied, and thereby the Heart cleansed ; then, and
not

not till then, can we come to know *the Lord our Righteousness.*

He that is reduced to such a Qualification as to have *Good-will* to all Men, is of all Men most godly; for as God, in his unlimited Love to Mankind, *causetb his Sun to shine on the Evil and on the Good, and his Rain to descend on the Just and on the Unjust;* so he that hath *Good-will* to all, will not *wrong* any, *oppress* any, shew *Violence* to any, or speak *Evil* of any, but be ready to serve all Men in Love and Faithfulness; and this is a true Character of a sober, righteous, godly Man; such are converted indeed, and become as a weaned Child, and are entered that Kingdom that consists in Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost.

And since this Reformation is only and alone by the *Grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ, give me leave to say, with the Prophet, *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Water and drink;* every one that hath a Desire in his Soul after Righteousness, turn in to the *Grace* of God in your own Hearts. The Water that the Prophet invited all thirsty

Souls unto, is no other than that which Christ giveth, which whosoever drinketh thereof, thirsteth no more, but hath (as many at this Day can witness) a Well in himself, not only issuing, but flowing up to eternal Life.

The *Grace* of God is a *free Gift*, without Money and without Price ; nothing is required on Man's Part, but to hearken thereunto, and take Counsel therefrom ; *Hear*, said the Prophet, *and your Souls shall live.*

Adam hearkening to evil Motions died unto Righteousness, and so do all ungodly Men ; but he that hearkens to the Voice of *Grace*, lives unto Righteousness, and from the Flowings of that Spring that he hath in himself, leads a sober, righteous, godly Life in this present World.

Hearing and *Reading* at the best, tend to instruct us in what we ought to do, but Godliness is doing what *Grace* teacheth ; and all such Doings are right and good.

Quest. 8. *Were not the Scriptures written for our Learning, and are not they a sufficient Rule of Righteousness ?*

Answ.

Ans. The Scriptures are a Rule ; but who can walk by that Rule, unless he be *inspired* with the good Spirit of God ?

The House of *Jacob* had only ten Commands written on Tables of Stone, but many other Statutes and Judgments, proceeding from a righteous Judge, written in their Books, and not only read, but also expounded unto them every Sabbath-day, that they might walk in righteous Paths ; but though they had the Words of God in their *Books*, many had not the Fear of God in their *Hearts*, and so they thought they had a great Zeal for an outward Worship and Form of Devotion, yet were ungodly in Life and Conversation.

And what shall I say of us who are called *Christians* ? We have the Words of God, and the Words of Christ, the Words of the Prophets, and the Words of the Apostles in our *Books*, we have large Rules of Righteousness, but do we guide our Steps by our Rule ? Or can we ?

The *Christians* Rule of Righteousness is Christ's *Direction* ; let us who
say

say the Scripture is our Rule, examine our Abilities to walk by our Rule : Are we Lights to the World ? Do our good Works glorify God, or shame our *Christian* Profession ? Are we so far from committing Adultery, that we have not so much as a lustful Thought ? Are we so far guided by the Truth, that every Word that proceeds out of our Mouths by way of Promise, is sure and stedfast ? Can we *refrain from smiting when we are smitten* ? Can we *give our Cloak to him that sues us at the Law, and wrongfully takes away our Goat* ? Can we *love our Enemies* ? Can we *blest them that curse us* ? Can we do *Good to them that hate us* ? Can we *pray for them that despitefully use us* ? Can we *depend on God's Providence, without taking Care what we shall eat, or what we shall drink* ? Can we do unto all Men in all Things whatsoever, as we would that they should do unto us ? This is Christ's Yoke ; can we bow our Hearts and Minds thereunto ? This is Christ's Burthen, and can we bear it ? He said, *his Yoke was easy, and his Burthen light* ; but if these Things are

too hard, and too heavy a Burthen to us, it is because we have not his *Grace* and his *Spirit* ; we have a *Christian* Name, but are not in the *Christian* Nature ; we have a Rule, but have not Power to walk by our Rule ; and then what Good does our Rule do us ?

If ever we think to walk by Scripture Rules, if ever we intend to keep our Lord's Command, and if we would lead a righteous, godly Life in this present World, we must turn in to the *Grace* of God in our own Hearts, for that gives us Power to keep to our Rule.

It was for want of *Grace*, that the Seed of *Abraham* could not keep *Moses's* Commands ; it is for want of *Grace*, that *Christians* do not keep *Christ's* Commands ; he lays no other Burthen on us than what he bore himself ; the Fulness of *Grace* that dwelt in him, made all these Things easy to him ; and as we grow in *Grace*, till we come to be filled therewith, they will be easy unto us ; *Grace* mortifies Sin, and where Sin is mortified, nothing is easier than to lead a righteous Life.

Obj.

Obj. *But some may say, our Dependance for Life and Salvation is not on Works of Righteousness, but on Faith; we believe, and therefore hope to be saved.*

Ans^w. I know that is most Men's Dependance, and Faith we all think we have; but is it a Faith that *purifies* the Heart, and makes our Bodies fit Temples for the Holy Ghost?

Paul put the *Corinthians* on an Examination of themselves, on a Trial and Proof of their *Faith*, and it would not be amiss, if all that account themselves Believers, did prove their Faith by the same Touchstone; *Know ye not*, said *Paul*, *that Christ is in you, except you be Reprobates.*

Was Christ in the *Corinthians*, and is he not in all Men that turn from Ungodliness, and come to have their Hearts *purified*?

How can we know the only true God, if we do not behold his Presence? How can we know our Saviour, if he be not in us, to save us from our spiritual Enemies, as *Joshua* was in the Camp of *Israel*, to save them from their outward Enemies? And this is Life eternal, not
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only to *bear* of a God and a Saviour, but to *know* him, to *feel* the Power of God, and to be *Witnesses* of Christ's Salvation ; these are Believers, and true Believers, for their Eyes have *seen* what they *believe*.

Faith and Works of Righteousness go together, he that hath the one hath both, and *Grace* is the Spring from whence both proceed ; the Reprobate, the Ungodly, the Graceless, have neither.

Quest. 9. *If inward and spiritual Grace be sufficient to teach us our Duty towards God and Man, and to establish us in Righteousness ; wherefore was there an outward Ministry, and to what End were Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers, given to the Church ?*

Ans. *Paul*, as he told King *Agrippa*, was made a Minister and a Witness ; he was a Witness of the powerful Operation of *Grace* in his own Soul, and so could tell others what it could do for them.

In the State of Degeneration all Men are Strangers to *Grace*, they know not
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the Lord ; and the Work of the Ministry is to *open* the Understandings of all such, and to turn them to this heavenly Teacher, since nothing else can enable us to lead a sober, righteous, godly Life in this present World.

And as some were ordained to *plant*, so others were given to *water*, that no young Plant might wither before they came to be rooted and grounded.

We find, that in the primitive Times some declined from what they had *attained* to, for that they kept not with their *Guide* ; and with such *Paul* was forced to travail in Birth again : For as Plants are not grounded as soon as they are planted, so Men are not established in Righteousness as soon as they are turned from Unrighteousness ; and such as were Strong, were to watch over the Weak, and lend them a helping Hand in their Travels, until they all came in the Unity of the Spirit to be *perfect* Men ; and then there is no more Need of *Man's* Help ; and we are all *perfect* Men, when a *right* Spirit comes to have the *whole* Government in us.

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But who are fit to *plant and water*? No ungodly Man, for such have not the Spirit of *Jesus*, such know not the Way of God's Salvation themselves, and so cannot direct others thereto, nor lend them a Hand therein; but such as are, what *Paul* after his Conversion was, not only a Minister, but a Witness of what he testified; or such as have travelled in the Way of God's Salvation themselves, and are come, through the Teachings of *Grace*, to that Strength and Perfection, as to *deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World.*

A Trial

A Trial of Christianity, from the Life and Nature of CHRIST, and true Christians: With a Description of true Godliness, and the Way by which we may conform our Lives thereunto.

MANY Professors of *Christianity* in our present Age conclude, that Godliness consisteth in *Hearing, Reading, Praying, Praising, &c.* which are all good Exercises, if rightly performed, and may be called *Christian Duties*, for that all true *Christians* are required, and by the good Spirit of God in their own Hearts, often stirred up to perform them.

Howbeit, the Performance of these and such like Things alone, is no certain Proof of Godliness; *Christianity* cannot be known thereby, for as there was a more excellent Righteousness than what was found in the zealous *Pharisees*, so
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there is a more excellent Godliness than what appears in most professed *Christians*.

For *Hearing, Reading, Praying, Praising*, with other Exercises of that Nature, may be imitated ; the Ungodly, as well as the Godly, the Formalist, as well as the Sincere, may be found in the Practice of such Things ; but true Godliness cannot be *imitated*, being the natural Effects of the Rule and Government of a right Spirit, and may be truly called the *Issues of Life*, which none can bring forth, but such who are *Christians* indeed.

True Godliness is *supernatural*, and so above the Reach of *Adam's* Off-spring, who whilst they continue in the Fall, are Servants to Sin ; we must be reduced to a god-like Nature before we can bring forth a godly Conversation : Grapes cannot be expected from *Thorns*, nor Figs of *Thistles*, the Tree must be made good before the Fruit can be good, a righteous Life is the natural Effects of a right Spirit ; our Lights cannot shine forth before Men, until we are enlightned with the Light of Christ.;

Christ ; without a true Conversion, there can be no true Conversation ; for all Men in the Nature of fallen *Adam*, being ungod-like, until we are raised by Christ the second *Adam*, we cannot live god-like.

The *Life* and *Nature* of Christ, all true *Christians* who have the Spirit of Christ, may find in themselves ; and others may have some Sense thereof by reading and well considering the Contents of the fifth, sixth, and seventh Chapters of *Matthew*, where it is said, that *Jesus seeing the Multitude, went up into a Mountain, and when he was set, his Disciples came unto him, and he opened his Mouth and taught them ;* and what he taught his Disciples then, he teacheth all true *Christians* now ; for though he ascended, the holy Spirit that dwelt in him descended, and did then, doth now, and to the End of the World will tabernacle with all the Lord's Redeemed, to be their *Teacher* ; and as many as walk after this Spirit are taught of Christ, and walk in his Foot-steps : For as no Vine beareth one Kind of Grape, and the Branches another, so every

every Member of Christ answereth the Life of Christ in their Conversations, they are naturally humble, lowly, meek, merciful, patient, peaceable, just, upright, honest and faithful: A *Christian* is not known by his *Words* or his *Devotion*, but by his *Works*, his *Nature*, his *Life*, and his *Conversation*.

I shall not insist on all Particulars contained in the fore-mentioned Chapters, but chiefly on the five following Exhortations or Commands of our Lord; the least of which, for a true Trial of *Christianity*, is more to be observed than that Command, *Luke xxii. 19. This do in Remembrance of me*; for that the Proud as well as the Humble, the Cruel as well as the Merciful, the Fraudulent as well as the Just, the Ungodly as well as the Godly, can conform to the one, but cannot conform to the other.

The true Trial of *Christianity* is, to be found in the *Life* and *Nature* of Christ; if the Spirit of Christ hath the *Rule* in us, these following Fruits will be brought forth by us.

1. In all our Communication, our *Yea* will be *Yea*, and our *Nay*, *Nay*, the Word that goeth out of our Lips will be sure.

He that is a *Christian* indeed hath no Necessity in himself, nor need to be urged by others, to bind his Soul with an *Oath* to perform his Word, for the Law of the Spirit of Life in our own Hearts *constrains* us so to do.

Christians in their Communications weigh their Words, before they utter them, with their Capacities to perform them, knowing that a Promise cannot be broken without violating the righteous Law of God in their own Hearts, and whenever such Violence is done, *Terror ensues*; and this makes good Men, who live under the Government of Christ, dread much more to break their Words, than others do to forfeit their Bonds; and this holy Dread makes our *Yea* to be *Yea*, and our *Nay* to be *Nay*; this makes us *cautious* in our Promises, and *careful* in our Performances; the Exhortation may be read in Scripture, but the binding Tie must be known in our own Hearts: All that
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have the Scripture have this Rule, but unless we have a Principle of Life in ourselves, we cannot walk by this Rule ; and we must not only have such a Principle, but we must also improve it by a continued Practice, before it comes to be our *Life*, our *Center*, and our *Nature* ; till then we may say, *these Things we should do* ; but cannot say, *these Things we do* ; and so witness against ourselves, that though we have the Scriptures, we walk not according to the Scriptures ; though we have the Words of Christ, we are not in the *Life* and *Nature* of Christ : Our *Yea* is not *Yea*, and our *Nay, Nay*, in our Communication ; our Words and our Promises are not stedfast and sure.

Swearing in the Communication of *Christians* is *superfluous*, for where Truth rules in the Heart, there cannot be Falshood in the Lips : Prove a professed *Christian* by this Rule, measure him by this Line, weigh him in this Balance, If his *Yea* be *Yea*, and his *Nay, Nay*, in all his Communication : If he be a Man of his Word at all Times : If his Performances be one with his Promises,

he abides in the Doctrine of Christ ; and this is an evident Demonstration that he is a *Christian* indeed. But if these Performances are wanting, though we have a *Christian* Name, we are not in the *Christian* Nature ; for as I said before, what Manner of Grape the Vine beareth, the Branches thereof, if they continue in the Vine, bear the same.

The second Exhortation or Command of our Lord was this, *Resist not Evil* ; and this was not only his *Doctrine*, but his *Life* and *Nature*, as we may plentifully read in Scripture ; though he met with Revilings, Reproaches, Buffetings, and cruel Usage, we do not find that he was once moved thereby, much less that ever he *resisted*, but gave his Face to the Smiter, and his Cheeks to them that plucked off the Hair ; and when he was led as a Lamb to the Slaughter, *he was as a Sheep dumb before the Shearer, he opened not his Mouth*, so much as to say, *What have I done ? Or, Why is it thus ?*

Now the Fruits of the Spirit in Head and Members, Captain and Followers, Christ and *Christians*, are one in Nature ;

Nature ; for as Christ was humble, lowly, meek, patient, peaceable, under all his Sufferings, so are *Christians*, if *Christians* indeed ; they render not Evil for Evil, they desire not an Eye for an Eye, nor a Tooth for a Tooth ; Revenge of any Kind is far from them ; but as Patience and Forbearance was the *Life* and *Nature* of Christ, so it is the *Life* and *Nature* of all *Christians*, as they grow in *Grace*, and come to the Fulness of the Stature of Christ.

And by this also, Professors of *Christianity* may prove themselves, whether they are *Christians* indeed, for it is the Deed that manifesteth all Things, for bad Men may have good Words : Forms may be *imitated*, but the Patience, the Meekness and Forbearance, that dwelt in Christ, and may be found in all true *Christians*, cannot be *imitated*. If any Vice hath got head in us, make what Profession we will, the Fruit of that Vice will be brought forth by us ; we shall be proud, we shall be covetous, we shall be envious : If we are reviled, we shall revile ; if we are smitten, we shall smite ; if we are sued

at the Law causelessly, we shall sue ; whilst it is so, we are in the World's Nature, their Spirit hath the Rule over us, and not the lowly, meek, Lamb-like Spirit of J E S U S.

The third Exhortation or Command of Christ, was this, *Love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do Good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you.*

This also was not only the Doctrine, but the Life and Nature of Christ ; and as it is the Life and Nature of Christ, so it is the Life and Nature of *Christians*, who are thoroughly leavened with the Spirit of Christ.

No Man having the Spirit of *Jesus*, and living under the Government thereof, can *bate* the Person of any Man, for that by Creation we are all the Workmanship of God's Hands ; and all true *Christians* know, that *Enmity, Hatred, Cursing, Spight and Persecution*, proceed not from Men or Women as they are the Lord's Creation, but as they have lost his Image, and thereby become emptied of Good, and filled with all Evil ; for as an evil Spirit comes

comes to have the Rule over us, evil Fruits will be brought forth by us.

Could we but see ourselves, did we but observe our own Natures, with the Fruits we bring forth in our Lives, we might easily judge of ourselves and others, whether we were *Converts* or not, whether the Spirit of Christ, or the Spirit of this World had the Rule in us, and over us ; for the Course of our Lives, especially in Times of Trial, declares who are led by the meek Spirit of *Jesus*, and who are not ; who are leavened with the Leaven of Righteousness, and who are not ; who lead a sober, upright, godly Life, and who do not ; for it is not our Words, but our *Conversation* that manifests what Spirit hath Rule in us, and over us.

For until by Conversion, our Natures come to be *changed*, we cannot love *Enemies*, having as much Enmity against them, as they have against us ; we cannot *blefs* them, we cannot *pray* for them, we shall be forward to do them Hurt, but far from doing them Good.

Come Professors of *Christianity*, lay aside your Forms that you have long contended about ; measure yourselves by this Line, try yourselves by this Touchstone ; are you reduced to such a Frame of Spirit as to *love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do Good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you?* This is a true Character of *Christianity*, this declares us to be *Christians* indeed.

But if our Natures are averse to these Things, let our Profession be what it will, we bear not the Image of God, we are not the Children of our heavenly Father, *for he maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and Unjust ;* and were we but truly converted, were our Natures thoroughly changed, our Lives would be conformable, we should be *Christians* indeed.

A fourth Branch of the Life, Nature and Doctrine of Christ, was manifested in these Words, *Take no Thought what ye shall eat, what ye shall drink, nor yet for your Body what ye shall put on ; but seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness.* And

And what is this Kingdom that all true *Christians* should first seek ? It cannot be any Thing above our Reach, it must be that Kingdom that Jesus compared to a lost Piece of Silver ; it must be an Acquaintance with that Spirit, and the Government thereof, that from the Beginning the great God placed in the Hearts of Men, to be our *Instructor* in Paths of Righteousness ; which Spirit alone for some Time dwelt in the first *Adam*, but was more abundantly manifested in Christ the second *Adam* ; and so called in Scripture the *Spirit of Christ* ; for that it always dwelt in him, and was not only his Life, but the Life that he gives to all true Believers, for their Ransom from under the Power of Sin and Satan, and so necessary to be first sought ; for until an humble, lowly, meek, Lamb-like Spirit be raised in us, and come to have the Rule over us, we know not the Lord, nor cannot depend on his Providence ; for the Rule and Government of this Spirit reduceth every Member to an excellent Qualification, and as many as are taught thereby,

learn therefrom *in all Estates to be content.*

This was the Life and Nature of Christ ; *though Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air Nests, but the Son of Man had not where to lay his Head ;* yet was he content, his Thoughts run not out on Things pertaining to the Body ; it was Meat and Drink unto him to do his Father's Will, and to finish the Work that he was sent to do, a Work that none before him ever did, *namely, the fulfilling of all Righteousness, by doing the Thing that was right in the whole Course of his Life, as a President to all his Followers.*

And as many as have found the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and are come to live under the Rule and Government of a right Spirit, have the Mind of Christ ; though they live in the World, their Thoughts run not out after the World, a true *Christian* Conversation is to be *diligent* in our Callings, *moderate* in our Expences, and *content* with our Estates ; whosoever is reduced to a State of Temperance and Moderation, takes but little *Thought*
what

what they shall eat, or what they shall drink, or wherewithal they shall be cloathed ; they delight in Justice, Equity, Truth and Faithfulness, and their Thoughts are exercised therein, and resting on God's Providence, their honest Endeavour is attended with a Blessing.

And here Professors of *Christianity* may also prove themselves ; this is a true measuring Line, a Path that no Man can tread, but such as have the Spirit of Jesus ; all ungodly Men seek the World first, I may say *first* and *last*, the Riches of the World, the Honour of the World, the Pleasures of the World, and the Praise of the World. *What they shall eat, or what they shall drink* to please their Appetites, *what they shall put on* to be accounted great in the World, and to have the Preheminence above and before their Fellow-Creatures ; their Thoughts run far more, how they shall be *conformable* to the Fashions of the World, than how they shall be *conformable* to the *Life, Nature, and Doctrine* of Christ ; which is more *Heathen-like* than *Christian-like*,

and not effected by the most Part without much Dishonesty.

This is the natural State of the Sons and Daughters of Men, whilst they continue in a State of Degeneracy, Aliens to the Common-wealth of *Israel* and Strangers to that Covenant of Promise that the Lord made with the House of *Jacob* ; and to a better State none can come, but by seeking and finding the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, or the Rule and Government of Christ by his eternal Spirit in our own Hearts ; there the Seed is sown, there the Leaven is laid, there the Pearl of great Price is found, but not without digging deep ; for whilst Vice is uppermost, Virtue is lowermost ; whilst Sin reigns, the Power of Grace is not felt ; the bringing down of the one, is the Exaltation of the other ; there must be a Death unto Sin, before there can be a new Birth unto Righteousness, and there must be a new Birth unto Righteousness, and a Growth in Righteousness, before we can center in that Content, as to take no *Thought what we shall eat, what we shall drink,*

drink, or wherewithall we shall be cloathed. And so it is every Man's principle Concern, *first*, to seek the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness; *first*, to know the Rule and Government of a right Spirit in ourselves; for this qualifies us, and makes us capable of leading a *Christian* Life, and of performing *Christian* Duties both to God and Man.

The fifth and last Branch of the Life, Nature and Doctrine of Christ, that I shall here insist upon, is this, *All Things whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them, for that is the Law and the Prophets*; for this is that the righteous Lord God required from his People in all Ages.

This *Doing* is accounted by many zealous Professors of *Christianity*, in our present Age, a moral Righteousness, and so but a *small* Part, or rather *no* Part of true *Godliness*; but rightly considered, all *actual* Righteousness, if it proceed from a right Spirit, is in itself the *true* Righteousness of *Faith*; and that *moral*, or of no Authority, which is performed from a carnal Mind, in Imitation.

tation of good Men's Practices, but out of their Life and Nature ; for if the Tree be known by its Fruits, Fruit manifesteth the Nature of the Tree. If our God be, as certainly he is, righteous in all his Ways, and just in all his Works, no People on the Face of the Earth are more God like, none bear his Image more exact, than such whose Conversations are *upright, honest and just* ; and nothing can be more just, than to *do unto others in all Things, whatsoever we would that they should do unto us.*

This is the *excellent* Righteousness, this exceeds not only the Righteousness of the *Scribes and Pharisees* ; but the Righteousness of most Professors of *Christianity* ; for hereby we walk in Christ's Footsteps, we fulfil both the Law and the Prophets.

Moses, from an Admiration of the Justice and Equity that the Lord required from the Sons and Daughters of Men, under the Administration of the Law, uttered these Words, *What Nation is there so great, who hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous, as all this*
Law

Law that I set before you: And doth the Law of the Spirit of Life require less Righteousness from *Christians*, than that outward Law did from the *Jews*? I tell you nay, but rather more, for that more Power is given to all true *Christians* to perform Acts of Righteousness.

Were the Understandings of all who are called *Christians*, enlighten'd to see themselves as they are, or had they but Hearts to prove themselves by this *Christian* Rule, measure themselves by this *strait* Line, weigh themselves in this *equal* Balance, the following Sorts of Men and Women with many others, would no more pass for true *Christians* in God's Account, than clipt and counterfeit Money, when it came to the Balance, did in Men's Accounts.

As *First*, All such who in Suits of Law, by perverting Justice, or other subtle Contrivances, possess themselves of Houses, Lands, or Goods, that they had no Right unto.

Secondly, All such who by violent robbing, or private stealing, take that which is not their own.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, All such who detain the Wages of the *Hireling*, or grind on the Necessities of the *Poor*, by beating down the Value of their Labour till they cannot *live* thereby.

Fourthly, All such who in Trade or Dealing use light Weights, short Measure, or any other kind of Deceivableness.

Fifthly, All such who cast their Burthens on other Mens Shoulders, and go free themselves.

Sixthly, All such as either give or take Bribes to effect Things that are not right.

Seventhly, All such who take Wages to serve Lord or Master, and are not faithful to their Trust.

Eighthly, All such as make Contracts, and perform not the same ; or engage themselves by Promises, and have no Regard to their Word.

Ninthly, All such who by evil Reports, Whisperings, or Backbitings, sow the Seeds of Strife, create Prejudice, or quench Charity.

None of those abide in the Doctrine of Christ, none of these do as they would

would be done unto ; though they bear a *Christian* Name, they are Strangers to a *Christian* Life, they live not under Christ's Government, they are not swayed by a Scepter of Righteousness, and so are not God-like.

Godliness and *Christianity* bear but one Image, and if we would know the Nature of *Godliness*, let us consider the Nature of *Ungodliness*. All sober Men will grant that the Proud, the Covetous, the Envious, the Fraudulent, the Extortioner, the Swearer, the Lier, &c. are *ungodly*, and well they may, for where any such Vice gets head, little of the Image of God appears ; and if such Things make Men ungod-like, the contrary, which is Humility, Meekness, Moderation, Sobriety, Truth, Equity, and Faithfulness, must needs make us Godly.

To become ungodly is an easy Thing, for if our Backs are turned on God, we have nothing in our Eye but the World and Vanities thereof, promising us such Content, that little else is minded.

But

But the great Difficulty is to become Godly again ; though Thousands are employed therein, little Shew doth appear ; for in the Eyes of degenerated Men, there is no Loveliness in that Path, and therefore the great Query is, By what Way may the Proud become *humble*, the Wild become *sober*, the Covetous become *content*, the Fraudulent become *just*, the Intemperate become *moderate*, the Incontinent become *chaste*, the Unfaithful become *faithful* ? I know many will say, by hearing good Ministers, reading good Books, and conferring with good Men. But these Things have been tried, and that for several Years by many, yet no such *Change* hath been wrought thereby.

If Advice, Exhortation, or Counsel, would effect this great Work, we need not go any farther than the heavenly Sayings of Christ, in the aforesaid fifth, sixth, and seventh Chapters of *Matthew* ; for if we could hear all the Ministers in the World, read all the good Books in the World, and confer with all the good Men in the World, we could not have better Advice, Counsel,
and

and Exhortations, than is contained in those three Chapters.

By hearing good Ministers, reading good Books, and conferring with good Men, we may be convicted, but not thoroughly *converted* : For as Virtue hath a Spring, so Vice hath a Root that Words will not reach. The Strength of Sin is the Growth of that Seed that the wicked One hath sown in the inward Parts of the Sons and Daughters of Men ; and forasmuch as the Cause is *within*, it is impossible it should be wholly removed by Things *without* ; but as the Cause is *within*, so the Cure must be *within*, by mortifying the Body of Sin, or bringing down the Strength thereof, which is thus effected.

There is no unrighteous Thing done, but there is an inward Motion before there is any outward Action, and by that Light which enlighteneth every Man that cometh into the World, if our Eyes are inward, we may see those Motions ; and the Way to mortify the Body of Sin is, to deny and turn from every such Motion in the *Rising* thereof, and so to crush the Cockatrice in the Shell ;

Shell ; for in their Rising they are weak and powerless, and may be easily turned back.

And if we do not suppress Vice in the Risings thereof, it will continue our Lord ; but by every such Denial, we bring down that which would arise and reign in us, and over us ; whether it be Pride, Covetousness, Envy, Falshood, or any other Vice whatever ; for the more Denials are given to Vice, the fewer Assaults it will make ; the stronger the Opposition, the weaker the Attempt : As *yielding* gives Vice Ground to grow from a Seed to a Body, *Denials* bring it down from a Body to a Seed ; so that though something thereof may abide in us, it doth not reign over us, but is in Subjection to the Scepter of Righteousness, or Rule of a right Spirit.

The Axe is never laid to the Root of the Tree, till a Reformation begins *within* ; the Life of Righteousness stands in the Mortification of Sin, which is an *inward* Work. The Spirit of this World must be brought *down*, before the Spirit of the Lord can be *exalted* in us : But as a right Spirit comes to reign,

reign, we have as many Motives to Acts of Righteousness ; as ever we had to Acts of Unrighteousness ; and as we give ourselves in Obedience thereunto, *Grace* grows in us, and we grow in *Grace* : It is a Change in Government that changeth our Natures, and makes us to become new Creatures.

By this we come to have the Blessing as well as the Birth-right ; for the Blessing is not to the exalted Mind, but to the Poor in Spirit, to the Merciful, to the Pure in Heart, who hunger and thirst, not after Riches and Honour, but after Righteousness ; and all that hunger and thirst after it, will endeavour to satisfy their Souls with an Increase of it.

Now a Talent is not improved by lying hid in a Napkin ; if we would have more *Grace*, we must exercise the Measure we have attained unto ; we must live in the continual Practice of right Things ; we must keep in Lowliness, Meekness, Temperance, Patience, and other Virtues ; we must be just in our *Dealings*, as well in the smallest Concern, as such as are more weighty ;
for

for a small Matter turns the Balance, and if that small Matter be wanting, Things are not just, we do not even as we would be done by.

And this *just Dealing*, as Righteousness comes to reign, will be no hard Thing, for as we accustom ourselves thereunto, it will be uppermost ; it will be as a diligent Handmaid, ready to offer her Service : And every Act of Righteousness performed from the Motives of a right Spirit, hath its immediate Reward ; which is not only an Answer of Peace, but Joy in the Holy Ghost.

The Way of Life is the Way of Pleasantness, all her Paths are Peace ; nothing makes it to seem difficult, but the Averseness of our Natures, when once corrupted, thereunto ; but as our Natures come to be changed, we shall from a sensible Experience say with *David*, *Tby Commandments are exceeding broad*.

I cannot recommend myself, nor any other, after we are awakened unto Righteousness, to any better Way for the Reforming of our Lives, than to
turn

turn in our Eye to the *Gift* of God in ourselves ; that by his Candle we may see the Rising of Vice, and so to deny it ; that the contrary, which is *Grace* and *Truth*, may rise and reign in us ; for that is our *Help*, that is our *Strength*, and that is our *Defence*.

Words, whether retain'd in our Memories, or written in our Books, are but weak Instruments for this Work, because the old Man must be put off, which is an *inward* Work ; and how is a sorry Guest put off, or a Man that urgeth for that we are not willing to grant, but by *denying* him, and *turning* from him ?

Should we enter into Reasoning with any Motions of Sin, 'tis much if we are not *overcome* thereby, for that it is the Nature of Sin, not to turn back at a small Denial, especially if it be a Sin that hath prevailed over us before ; but in turning therefrom we give it the Repulse, if it be not hearkened unto, it goes back.

And as the old Man is put off, the new Man is put on ; as Vice is denied, Virtue is embraced : And this new Man
makes

makes us new Creatures ; that which is created after God, renews in us the Image of God, and bearing that Image in Holiness and Righteousness, our Conversations will declare us to be *Christians* indeed.

But if this old Man with his Deeds of Darkness, be not put off, the new Man, that is created after God's Image in Righteousness and true Holiness, will not be put on ; and though we have been awakened unto Righteousness, we shall fall asleep again, some in one Form and some in another, feeding on Words without any Sense of Power or Life ; and this *second* Sleep appears to be a *dead Sleep* ; for that tho' we may hear much spoken against Pride, Covetousness, Envy, &c. we are not as much as *touched* therewith, but live in the *open* Shew thereof.

Did the Sons and Daughters of Men, who are called *Christians*, make it their Concern to be *Christians* indeed, by mortifying in ourselves the Spirit of this World, which is the Original of all Vice, we should be not only a happy, but a lovely People ; for by mortifying
the

the Body of Sin, Oppression would cease, all Wrongs and Injuries would determine and be at an End ; *Love* would spring both to God and Man, *Grace* would grow, Humility, Meekness, Moderation, and all other Virtues would shew themselves ; we should be another manner of People in our Conversations ; our Words and our Works would be just, upright, and honest ; we should confide in one another without any Scruple or Doubt : What is more lovely than to be at all Times, and on all Occasions, just, upright, honest, and faithful, doing to all Men in all Things whatsoever, even as we would that they should do unto us ? A living under the Rule and Government of a right Spirit, qualifies us, and makes us capable of performing every *Christian Duty* : *We shall love the Lord our God with all our Hearts, and our Neighbours as ourselves* ; which is the Sum of all *Godliness*, and the true *Character* of *Christianity*.



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